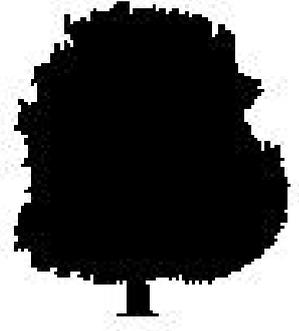


Military Muddling



Volume 13 Issue 1

Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group Newsletter

November 2001

Editorial

Welcome to my first issue. I hope I can keep a steady stream of these going over the year, but of course I need your help for that. So make sure you write something. An easy way to do this is to preview your game and then write an onside report, and also offside reports of the games you play. I could also do with any cartoons you find as I have a shortage of these. You can either scan & e-mail them or post them to me and I'll scan them.

Contributions for Military Muddling

To: James Kemp, preferably by e-mail to milmud@chestnutlodge.org.uk but you can also send paper or disks to me at 3 Gavinburn Gardens, Old Kilpatrick, Glasgow, G60 5ND (note that this is a temporary address)



DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 26 November 2001

Trevor Farrant (Events Organiser) 020 8577 2573

Mukul Patel (Games Organiser & Admin Officer)

Michael Dollin (Treasurer)

CLWG GAME PROG- to get the most up-to-date version of this, check the website at <http://www.clwg.org.uk/diary.html>

Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group

CLWG Diary 2001-02

Date	Venue	Game	Author	Players	Blurb
Sun 4 Nov 2001	Arthur Harman's House	Celtic Tribal Politics	Jim	Any number	Design session, see preview in this issue.
Sat 24 Nov 2001	Eardley School	Lenin on the Wire	Bernie Ganley	Megagame	Second go at the megagame of the Russian Civil War
Sat 15 Dec 2001	John Rutherford's House	Western Democracy	Michael Dollin	As many as are interested	Design session, see preview in this issue.
		Christmas Party, incl quiz		All of us	Eat, drink and be merry!
Sun 6 Jan 2002	Jim Wallman's Office	Against the Nature of Gentleness	Nick Luft		Wars of the Roses
Sat 2 Feb 2002	TBA				
Sun 3 Mar 2002	TBA				

Venues

Arthur Harman's House

Nearest tube is Morden, also close to Wimbledon. If in doubt about how to get there ask Arthur by e-mail arthur1815@lineone.net or call him on 020 8540 5212

115 Kenley Road
Merton Park
Wimbledon
London SW19 3DP

Games Organiser

Message From Mukul

On behalf of the club I want offers of games, playtests, playthroughs, design sessions. I have offers from:

Nick Luft
Rob Cooper
Jim Wallman
Arthur Harman

Have a think about my request. Can you help me out? If you can, contact me.

Email mukulpatel@37.com
Phone 020 8769 0538
Post 215 Valley Road
London SW16 2AF

Or just chat with me whenever we happen to meet.

Things I need when you do make an offer

- Participant numbers how many people do you need
- Venue - how many rooms needed, equipment needed such as tables or phones or intercoms etc,
- Is the session (game or whatever) ready to go and be included in the programme or is it still under development. If it is still under preparation when will it be ready
- When do you want to put it on or when do not want it put on.
- How much time do you want

If you do go ahead and offer something for the club's programme, write something for milmud like James asks. It might be as simple as paragraph introduction to your game session.

Venues, I hope can offer the following:

- Jim's Office in Central London, quite a few rooms and with intercoms.

- The Bedford Pub in Streatham, a single large room, with many tables.
- Club members homes

I also want something else; I want players and participants to come along to club meetings. Without players the most wonderful session/game cannot work and the club goes belly up, support your fellow members games and sessions.

Your call folks. CLWG needs you.

Golden Chestnut 2000-01

The Editor's Golden Chestnut for 2000-01 goes to Andy 'Lovable Curmudgeon' Grainger. Though distant geographically, whether Nott or Norm, he has provided us with a large quantity of interesting and well-written material, thank you and a vote of splendiddness proposed by John R.

CLWG Meetings

There was some discussion at the Business meeting about the format and timing of CLWG meetings. We thought that there ought to be a good look at how often we met and where we did so.

Personally I was always in favour of half-day meetings followed by going to the pub for a bit of socialising (and the downing of a few beers as well). Although given that I've moved to the dear green place (which apparently is the translation of Glasgow) it's pretty academic what I think.

However my limited experience suggests that a good many games get inspired in the pub by talking to Mukul, and some even get designed there - viz the swordfighting card game I designed with Jim one evening. Bring back going to the pub I say!

Offside Reports

Boundaries and Borders by Brian Cameron

I was immediately interested by this attempt at simulating the social/political/economic growth of a collection of competing states. In the past I have found that the temptation to add extra rules here and there to “make it more realistic” tends to have the cumulative effect of slowing the game down, and tempts one to add more and more rules until the whole thing collapses under its own weight (or needs handled by a computer – e.g. Civilisation).

However, I felt that Brian had managed to get a good playable game without being overly detailed. We left the game after the first Great War, in which the losers (myself included) were basically wiped out and I was feeling rather depressed about my future prospects had we continued. However, it may well be that I would have been surprised by my ability to bounce back and get back into the game. I think that a useful addition would be a rule enforcing a peace, i.e. preventing a player prosecuting a war simply because he wants to. A die roll factoring in the attacker’s Political Level (lower = more likely to carry on) and losses sustained (again, lower = more likely to continue) would shorten the war and make it more of an economic proposition than it seemed to be.

I look forward to playing again.

Alexander Kleanthous

Operation Rheinubung

I was playing the British Operations team, commanding the Home Fleet, Force H, Prince of Wales, Norfolk and Suffolk. This was the first time I had seen this game and I thought it worked very well.

The plotting system was good and the whole thing had quite a realistic feel to it (in my view – of course, I don’t know what “realistic actually was, but it felt like this might have been it!). From our point of view, we couldn’t understand why the Bismarck group let the little Suffolk carry on shadowing them by radar and broadcasting their position to the world, when any one of the German ships could have driven her off or sunk her. The German explanation after the game for this was that they didn’t know what was shadowing them, and it could have been the Prince of Wales as well, plus any other RN ships. We tend to take counsel from our fears. I certainly did at one point when I was doubtful about sending the Home Fleet nearer the Bismarck for fear it might come across a German wolf pack patrol line. However, the wobbly moment passed and we carried on at full steam and damn the torpedoes, just before the First Sea Lord enquired about our apparent moral lack of fibre.

In the time available, the whole southern area of operations became irrelevant. The focus of the game was the Bismarck, which started off Greenland damaged and hence making only 10 knots. The chances of Force H, which began in Gibraltar, actually getting anywhere near it were therefore pretty slim.

I thought this was an excellent game and a good historical simulation. I would be interested to see how it would work as a full day game, but not starting as a historical simulation but applying the system to a fictional starting position. This would enable the game designer to tweak the forces to achieve maximum playability and interaction.

Alexander Kleanthous

The Bismarck Controversy

By Deputy Chief of Gunnery Franz Kurzsehen (Senior Surviving officer)

With post war commentaries by Stephen Roadkill

Foreword:

This article is an expansion Kurzsehen's original defence of Capt. Lutjens published immediately after the war. It comprises the original log extracts from the Bismarck, as rescued by Kurzsehen, with his comments in the post war article (in italics), along with editorial comments from myself, based on British archives not immediately available to Kurzsehen post war (in square brackets). This article covers only the period from the sinking of the Hood to the point where the expected rendezvous with the Tanker ship Belcher, did not take place. It thus tries to answer the question that has plagued naval historians since the war- how did Germany's greatest battleship go from Germany's greatest naval victory to being alone in mid Atlantic without enough fuel to get home- in the space of a little over 24 hours?

SR

1200-1600 23rd May

Task Force at 68N 31W

Speed 20 knots

Bearing 200

Weather Foggy

Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 91

Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 136

Taskforce is attempting to break contact with the Shadowing British Forces. Morale remains very high after the successful action against Hood. Repairs have been unable to stem the loss of fuel.

It was not clear to gunnery at the time why the fuel loss could not have been abated much earlier. Not being party to the reports from the damage control

teams I was fairly ignorant of the rate of loss, at least for the first few hours.

[Conventional belief is that Lutjen's decision not to stop prevented his engineers from effecting a repair. It seems that Lutjens was worried about the possibility of the Prince of Wales rejoining the action after the loss of Hood, and did not want to risk an engagement before he could rendezvous with his tanker].

1600-2000 23rd May

Task Force turned to 240 degrees

Speed 10 knots.

Weather Foggy

Fuel remaining to Bismarck- 85

Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen- 135

After the failure to repair the fuel leak in the immediate aftermath of the battle, and without any set time for a repair, Capt. Lutjens set course for the Tanker Belcher at 62N 39W. Engineers did not manage to effect repairs in this period.

Report received from KM West that 2 Capital ships and 2 Cruisers sighted at 66N 13W heading at 270 at 20 knots.

Order received from KM west to rendezvous with OstGruppe U-boat pack operating around 63N 34W. Lutjens decided to proceed with rendezvous with Belcher as restoration of full fighting capacity of the Bismarck as his chief priority. Radio silence was maintained.

Order received from KM West advising that Lutzow released to operational command of Rhein task force.

Capt. Lutjens decided that with current rate of fuel loss he would be unable to get Bismarck home without a refuel. On that basis he decided to make for an immediate rendezvous with the stationary Belcher. At this time we received an

order from KM West to rendezvous with the OST Group of U-Boats operating near by. KM West also released Lutzow to our operational command without our being able to actually command her until she was in VHF range.

Lutjens disregarded the order to rendezvous with the U-Boat pack as he felt that the mission priority imperative was to get Bismarck fully operational, and without a tanker a rendezvous with a U Boat pack would not achieve this. KM West did not know how serious the rate of fuel loss was (he had not reported as radio silence was maintained throughout this period. He therefore judged the situation in the field as best he could, as any field commander should.

Lutjens and his staff had formed a plan built around a rendezvous with Lutzow, whereby Bismarck would detach when the Lutzow arrived, accelerating as she did so. The Hipper and the Prinz would then make for the rendezvous with the Lutzow at 10 knots, simulating a damaged Bismarck. By this subterfuge it was hoped that the British shadowers would follow the major force with the majority of their force, hopefully with the Prince of Wales. This would leave at most just one shadower for Bismarck to drive off before making the rendezvous with the oiler. This plan was set to be implemented at 1600 on the 24th.

That KM West had changed the tactical situation without making this fully clear to the Field commander was the responsibility of KM West, and it is therefore their failure to make the position clear that was the chief cause of the eventual fiasco.

[Kurzsehen was unwilling to grant that Doenitz was being careful with the operational security of the precious tanker, and that if Lutjens had

rendezvoused with the OST Gruppe, as ordered, then he would have been able to refuel. Kurzsehen maintained that his captain had judged the situation as best he could, and that without contact from the Taskforce, KM West should have left well enough alone. It is clear that this mistake in interpretation of orders led Lutjens and the Bismarck to its fate. Though heavily criticised after the war for failing to observe an order, the decision to observe strict radio silence is probably more to blame. It was an even more quixotic decision in so far as the British shadowing forces were in almost continual contact with TF Rhein throughout- and so little would have been lost had confirmation been sought from KM West].

2000-2400 23rd May

Task Force maintained course 240 deg

Speed 10 knots

Weather Foggy

Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 79

Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 134

Lutzow - 94

Radar sighting of a shadower, possibly cruiser class.

No repairs effected by the engineers.

People often asked after the action and indeed after the war why Lutjens did not turn to chase off his shadowers. As a gunnery officer I agreed with the sentiments of these people, however it must be stressed that we did not have reliable information on the composition of the shadowing force. Therefore to turn back with the full fleet would be to incur more fuel loss from the Bismarck, something we did not want to increase before we had refuelled. We also could not risk detaching the Prinz or Hipper, as we could not be sure that they would not run into the Prince of Wales and be significantly outgunned. While there was

the possibility of provoking an action, Lutjens made his decision in the best traditions of the service- maintenance of focus on one's objective.

[After the war, once it was clear that the Prince of Wales had been detached by the Admiralty after the damage suffered in the action with Hood, Lutjens received a great deal of criticism from his peers for not having taken the risk and driven off his shadowers. Especially as he was in charge of the most powerful squadron of German vessels to break into the Atlantic at any point in the war.]

2400-0400 24th May

Task Force maintained course 240 deg
Speed 10 knots
Weather Foggy
Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 73
Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 133
Lutzow - 92

Much British radio traffic intercepted by the signals section. No further orders from KM West. No repairs effected by the engineers to slow the rate of fuel loss. Crew morale understandably affected but the men overall in good spirits.

As we crept into the early hours of the 24th, we all had a moment to reflect on what had been achieved on that momentous day of the 23rd. We had engaged the pride of the Royal Navy- HMS Hood and one of their newest KGV class and bested them. While there had been difficulties, some proving quite difficult to resolve, morale was high.

[While Kurzsehen's pride in his Navy's achievement is understandable it must be remembered that Hood was over 20 years old at the time of her sinking, and while large was only armoured at Battlecruiser rating. Added to this the Prince of Wales was a new ship that had not completed its shake down cruise when sent against the

Bismarck. It helps to be dispassionate in evaluating these things.]

0400-0800 24th May

Task Force maintained course 240 deg
Speed 10 knots
Weather Foggy
Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 67
Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 132
Lutzow - 90

Report from KM West – U204 has engaged an enemy convoy and sunk 3 merchants and a capital class ship. A great tonic for the men. No repairs were effected by the engineers.

[Of course while the U 204 did sink 3 merchants, and she certainly did not sink the Ramilles, screening the convoy at the time. Ramilles went on to have a distinguished war record, participating in pre-invasion bombardments in the Mediterranean and off Normandy.]

0800-1200 24th May

Task Force maintained course 240 deg
Speed 10 knots
Weather Foggy
Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 61
Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 131
Lutzow - 88

No change to the fuel situation. Bismarck now dependent on the RV with Belchen.

It was now 24 hours after the Hood engagement and the failure to fix the fuel lines was of major concern, as born witness by the comment in the log.

[It was calculated after the war that the fuel remaining to Bismarck, immediately after the loss of Hood, was enough to reach Brest, but only if the rate of loss could be abated. That throughout the 24 hours after the action, Bismarck effected no repairs remains the biggest mystery in the puzzle.]

1200-1600 24th May
Task Force maintained course 240 deg
Speed 10 knots
Weather Clearing
Fuel remaining to Bismarck - 55
Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen - 130
Lutzow - 86

Fog lifting. No repairs to the Bismarck effected.

1600-2000 24th May
Task Force splits-

Bismarck maintained course 240 degrees
Speed 25 knots
Weather Clearing

Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen turned to Bearing 180, speed 10 knots.

Fuel remaining to Bismarck- 49
Admiral Hipper and Prinz Eugen- 129
Lutzow- 84

Fog lifting. No repairs to the Bismarck effected.

Air attack received just before the taskforce split up. 20 Swordfish torpedo bombers repulsed with heavy losses, no hits received.

Position of Belchen reached just before dusk in good visibility. Tanker not found. Crew morale somewhat impacted.

The repulse of the air attack was a mixed blessing. While we had endured the strike without loss, it indicated that the British forces from Scapa were closer than KM West had advised, as by our reckoning the Swordfish could have no more than a 250-300 mile range.

The failure to meet the tanker was a crippling blow, the more so as we later discovered that by sending it East KM

west had sent it into the path of the British county class that had been shadowing TF Rhein.

[The attack by 605 FAA Sqn, was actually launched at extreme range in poor visibility, found the target with difficulty, pressed their attack home with great gallantry and made a night landing afterwards. The much-underrated Swordfish actually had a range of about 1000 miles all told, and so at just over 400 miles this was within long range of this very versatile aircraft. The full story is told as part of Squadron Leader Bingo Fozzleton's autobiography "By Swordfish to battle - a long cold war in a very draughty plane."

The loss of the Belchen forced Lutjens into a show down with the British squadron racing towards his ships, and led the Bismarck to the concluding phase of the Rheinbung story.]

Michael Dollin

City of God by Richard Hands

I had some really weird feelings about this game after the multiple hijackings and suicide crashes in the USA 11/9/2001.

My role in the game was, the wise man of the mountain, leader of the radical Ishmali sect called the Assassins located in the mountains of Lebanon. Did I really want to play a role whose main role was to strike terror fear and death into the hearts of everybody? Before the game I read a chapter about the assassins in a book about the crusades. One particular thing I read was that these radical Ishmali Assassins in a certain city carried out terror attack. The local population the Sunnis and moderate Shias eventually got fed up and simply went into the back streets of the city hunted the peasant followers of the faith and massacred them without mercy. This had a profound effect on the way I played the game. I felt

that the same thing could happen to me. I did not want my local villagers being wiped out through inconsiderate actions on my part; I had a responsibility to them.

Anyway on the day of the game I tried to play a very two-faced role. Being nice to some people lying to others, who saw through my lies but who put up with my lies and generally squeezing a few of those who came to the holy land. I did order the assassination of people with varied success, but failed to strike those who I really wanted to get - the deviant spiteful heretical Muslims. I never actually assassinated a fellow player.

After some thought I am glad I did not kill any player. Putting myself in the shoes of a target, working hard to get things done, talking and fighting if needs be with other players and then way out blue yonder comes a dagger to the heart and I am dead. Would I like that, no sir! It's a bad way to be taken out of a game, no warning no chance just dead.

Onto the game itself. I think it worked and I enjoyed it. I reckon most other folk did, but I heard about one incident in which a player got mega pissed with the way an umpire killed him off. He left straight after that and a best guess is we will never see him again. The umpire who did this told me this story and how he felt a wee bit guilty and wondered how he would do it differently. Any ideas.

Mukul Patel

[I hope it wasn't me that killed the chap off, I wasn't on top form on the day as I was suffering from an upset stomach and only came along because John Rutherford phoned me to say that there was a shortage of umpires. Some of the way the game went struck me as being pretty strange, but I suspected that it was the players rather than the mechanisms that were at fault.]

Onside Reports

Operation Rheinubung

I enjoyed the first outing of my Rheinubung game, so I was pleased to be able to run it a second time on the Sunday afternoon at conference. To remind you - Operation Rheinubung was the code name for the Bismarck breakout into the North Atlantic. As before, I set the start of the game just after HMS Hood had been sunk, but I tweaked the scenario further to add variety and interest. This time I had enough players, so thanks to Mukul and Nick for assistance with the umpiring, and to Rob and Michael for the KM operational team, the father and son Farrant team for Group West/Doenitz and other German HQ functions, to Jim and Brian for the British HQ functions (mainly Western Approaches) and Peter Knowlden and Alex Kleanthous for the British operational team.

The scenario gave the historic position except for:

- The German squadron included Admiral Hipper as well as Prinz Eugen and Bismarck.
- Lutzow had slipped into the Atlantic several days earlier
- Atlantis (a commerce raider) was making her way from the South Atlantic
- Suffolk had been detached from force H to cover convoy WS8 (as in reality), but the rest of Force H were still in Gibraltar.
- Bismarck had a continuing fuel leak of 5 units (out of a total of 200 units to start with) per 4 hours until the damage could be repaired (1 on a d6 per 4 hours).
- Prince of Wales had been severely damaged and was being withdrawn to Iceland.

Because I had enough players, I also played the weather rules - I had pre-

generated the weather in a realistic pattern over the Atlantic.

The two issues that dominated the game were the weather and fuel. Bismarck used the fog near Greenland to cover her tracks effectively. Believing herself shadowed by a cruiser or two with POW, The German fleet commander played a cautious game in order meet up with a tanker and refuel before (I think the intention was) making for Brest to repair. The tanker meanwhile had been diverted by German HQ to refuel the U-Boats in one of the two wolfpacks at sea. The message to divert the tanker had not been picked up by Bismarck and the intended rendezvous was about to go horribly wrong when the game finished.

In terms of the game mechanics and development, in truth I learned little that I had not previously discovered. I had drastically changed the combat system, but its only outing was to adjudicate a strike by Swordfish from Victorious, operating at extreme range. The strike failed with the loss of one plane. I had umpteen pretty boats prepared (on the advice of Michael Dollin), but they unfortunately were not used in the time we had. I am not sure where this game goes next - either it is put in the loft for a few years until players want it again or possibly it could develop into a longer game and possibly it could involve the Mediterranean at the same time as the Atlantic. The other alternative is to move the action to another place - the Pacific maybe, with better carrier rules?

Dave Boundy

Armageddon 2: The good the bad and the Omnipotent by Jonathan Pickles and Mukul Patel
Mukul Patel

I am not going try and describe the game mechanics in detail. Crudely, the game is about the last thousand years of Earth's history as seen from the point of angels of Light and darkness as represented by the players in the game, who each have different agendas. The absence of a formal god in the game due to some theological trickery. (It has been seriously said that angels merely represent different aspects of God. So I could convert a split a single godhead into as many strands as I wanted.)

Players try and build up their power by bidding for cards from earth representing various important ideas and influences in our history, such as the Taj Mahal representing love and goodness. They use the power from these groups to buy weapons and angelic/demonic followers ready to postpone, contest and win the final battle.

I'm glad Nick found the game interesting and maybe in parts in fun and humorous. That was certainly an unstated intention given the ridiculous subject matter.

The pre-game hype had to be there unfortunately because a) Pickles and I thought we had a good game, b) had as Nick observed put a lot effort into production and presentation and so we wanted our time and effort made worthwhile by having a lot of players.

Problems in running the game, Pickles & I had quite sharp disagreements during the game about whether to alter the balance of the game in the light of how I perceived the balance of the game to be going. He sharply rebuked me, in effect saying that Players make the decisions, they know the rules, (hidden rules no one knew), so don't reward mistakes and punish considered play. Pickles was right, we did not change the rules and he let it roll on without tampering.

John's role-playing point. Given the way the game was designed to be hands off for the umpires and physically dispersed then it would have been hard to reward role-playing. It would have been very nice for lots of role-playing to go on, I think the character briefings were meant to give some hooks that were meant to encourage this.

Teams. I was disappointed here. I wanted there to be much more crossover communications and deals and alliances between angels of light and darkness than there were. The division between the those in heaven and fallen was too great. Some players did talk across the boundaries but not many. (There are similar real world boundaries such as the European socialists in the Great War in which they division into nations overwhelmed their class solidarity. It is possible to breach these boundaries, it just requires a little more thought in the design of the briefings and some of the physical layout of the game.

A major portion of the game eddied around the bidding process for earth cards. As Nick said this does need some minor refinement and the designers have already thought of simple and hopefully effective refinements, creating more varied and considered actions on Earth.

Again the designers agree with most of Nick's comments and Pickles has thought of ways of handling better with the final battle. Going back to John Rutherford's comments on rewarding role playing I am not sure how to do this, any suggestions??

The numbers bit in the game was and I think is simple. It is not rarefied calculus honestly. [*We all know John R doesn't do numbers*]

Is the club interested in having another go or skipping that a larger game incorporating views, behaviours and perceptions of the ancient Egyptian and Norse and other Gods?? [*Personally the latter sounds interesting*]

Murphy Mania

First let me say you guys were sorely missed. The show was OK but missed something (besides you of course). The atmosphere was somewhat subdued. Nothing really wrong but also no highlights.

The megagame went alright. The players were somewhat happier about it then I was. But then they played a game completely different from the one we designed. However great fun was had.

The game was called "San Coccochamba, Pearl of the Caribbean" The game is inspired by Junta and involved the government and parliament of the island paradise of San Coccochamba. Each player was a senator for life of the republic. Their main aim was to get as much money from the island into their Swiss bank account.

The island economy is based on banana-export, tourism and coca. Traditionally there are Marxist rebels on the island (Groucho Marxist in this case). There are a number of NPC in the game. First there are several EU representatives who have huge subsidies to give to anyone they like. I believe they tried to increase banana production and to get the economy to diversify into other products (canned bananas in syrup etc.) And last but certainly not least, there is Dolores McDuff, [*now there's a name you don't hear every day! I wonder if her family originally came from Cadiz...*] the grandniece of the first president of the island. She is very popular with the

people and can thus draw on a large number of votes in the parliament.

We ran the government and parliament in a single session without turns while the economics and combat were turn based. Decisions were taken into account during the next economic turn. In theory it looked great. In practice it worked somewhat differently. Instead of going for parliamentary action to control the government and increase their own wealth the remaining players started investing in their own lands. They build hotels like demented monopoly players.

We had all kinds of nice subtle mechanisms to cater for this. The amount of tourists that could enter the island was limited by the capacity of the airport and harbour. However the handling of the armed forces was abysmal. After about an hour the second city of the island was overrun by rebels and the tourists stayed away in droves.

For a large part of the game there were rebels in the capitol city Cadiz. [*That explains Dolores' popularity...*] The smarter and luckier players invested in coca while the unlucky ones scrambled to try and get rid of the rebels from their land. Meanwhile the president and government enriched themselves. The first president managed to stay in power from the start of the game at 11:00 until 15:00 before finally being shot. Before this happened he tried to have the parliament blown up. He entered the parliament with his guard and shot the person that replaced him as president and was instantly re-confirmed. After this outrage people finally decided enough was enough and they had him shot.

However the sheep elected his former minister of foreign affairs as the new president. This guy won the game with almost 200,000 euros in the bank. In the

end they managed to make deal with the rebels. The rebel forces were integrated into the customs service and got to own the TV and radio stations. (The rebels were umpire driven and on autopilot throughout the game.) At least the island was saved.

As I said great fun was had by all. For the rules it is back to the drawing board. But I am considering running it again somewhere next year to see if players learned anything. It all depends on how the others feel (Jurrien and Hans).

Dick Bax

Game Previews

Celtic Tribal Politics - A Design / Brain Storming Session

Outline By Jim Wallman

Some of you will remember the 1993 megagame 'Crisis in Britannia' about the Roman invasion of Britain. This was two quite different games - a 'serious' operational game for the Romans and a wide-ranging political/role playing game for the Celts.

Recently, I had the Celtic tribal game I devised for that megagame described to me as "...a Mickey Mouse game...".

Stung by the forceful criticism, I wondered if there was a better way of giving the tribe a proper 1st century Celtic 'feel' than the one I originally devised. This session is to brainstorm some alternatives.

I have certain criteria though -

- It should be as 'free form' as possible
- It should include roles for tribal druids and bards.
- The tribal teams must be large enough to allow discussion, friction and dissent (around 5-6 each team).

- It cannot be a game about mechanical resource allocation or involve 'straight' operational-type gaming.

This means that I have effectively excluded from the outset almost all of the recent megagame mechanisms (e.g. foamboard tally-boards and pins, for example wouldn't create the right 'feel' and be too 'boardgamey': a CCG would be too dull and clichéd).

Think of it as having freedom to experiment.

This isn't a trivial problem (if it were I wouldn't be holding a design session), and I am aiming to come up with something exciting and new for my megagame next year.

A previous knowledge of ancient Britain is not necessary, since I will give a short presentation on how I see the celtic tribal culture working, and provide any background info.

Enthusiasm and a lively interest in thinking up new ways of doing things will be most welcome.

And this might develop into a club game as well - who knows?

Western Democracy

Michael Dollin

For the Christmas session I will be running a game about the democratic processes in the West, a game with enough to be worth a playtest but hopefully also streamlined to fit into a larger Cold War game.

The game will work on the lines of political capital - where govts and oppositions invest their credibility in actions they deem most likely to work (in the case of govt initiatives) and fail (for

the opposition - basically being proved right in constant stream of doomsaying). Political capital will be fed into an electoral mincing machine, with some modifiers for electoral tactics (a card system) thrown in, along with a factional system producing party leaders within the major parties, who will also have an impact depending on their special characteristics.

Hopefully it will lead into a larger Cold War mega-game with each nuclear power having a political team and a technocrat team. The politicians will be vying for power, and providing some kind of "moral" steer to the direction of the state, while the technocrats will be haggling over budgets and priorities, providing a dead weight on Foreign policy initiatives, and drawing up plans for wars - conventional and nuclear.

I hope that there will be some comedy/fun to be squeezed from the political skulduggery etc with the cards designed to match historical examples of political skulduggery and showmanship- e.g. "Ich bin a Jam Donut" for boosting foreign credibility, or "Liddy, Gordon Liddy*" for Watergate style political activities.

*For those not aware, Gordon Liddy was one of the Watergate break in team (the plumbers) and had a fairly f***ed up view of his role at the time (i.e. thought himself a quasi secret agent battling the forces of treason- aka the hippies and democrats). He also claimed at an interview I saw that Kissinger was behind the pursuit of Watergate as some sort of palace coup. As can only happen in the states he now has his own sitcom...

Michael Dollin

Latest Terrorist News

Latest news reports advise that a cell of 4 terrorists has been operating in Glasgow.

Police advised earlier today that 3 of the 4 have been detained.

The Strathclyde Region Chief Constable stated that the terrorists Bin Robbin, Bin Drinkin and Bin Fightin have been arrested on immigration issues.

The Police advise further that they can find no one fitting the description of the fourth cell member, Bin Workin, in the area.

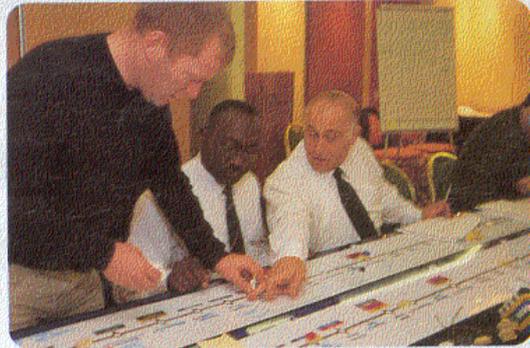
Police are confident that anyone who looks like Workin will be very easy to spot in the community.

Fitting the pieces

The challenge facing London Transport's Operation Meca was quite simple: How to move two-and-a-half million people out of the heart of London in the small hours of New Year's Day.

Since the beginning of the year, the 10-strong Meca (Millennium Event Contingency Arrangements) team has been working with the national rail network, local authorities, the police and many others to put together a working transport jigsaw for the big night.

The maps and their counters (really Lego bricks in appropriate line colours) helped to translate the paperwork into practice.



High command: experts plan Tube services

Chris Milner, LT's Millennium Manager, said: "We thought of using computer simulation, but the issues were so complex that this proved the best way of looking at things. We just hope there won't be a Lego shortage this Christmas!"

Colonel Waugh-Gaymer

The Voice of Reason



Operational security in the current international climate prevents Colonel Waugh-Gaymer from contributing to this much-esteemed journal.

HURRAH!

Expected Issue Dates for Military Muddling in 2002

Issue	Deadline	Post date	Meeting [1]
November [2]	19 October 2001	22 October 2001	Sun 4 November 2001
December [2]	26 November 2001	30 November 2001	Sat 15 December 2001
January	19 December 2001	21 December 2001	Sun 6 January 2002
February	18 January 2002	21 January 2002	Sat 2 February 2002
March	15 February 2002	18 February 2002	Sun 3 March 2002
April	22 March 2002	25 March 2002	6-7 April 2002
May	19 April 2002	22 April 2002	Sat 4 May 2002
June	17 May 2002	20 May 2002	Sun 2 June 2002
July	21 June 2002	24 June 2002	Sat 6 July 2002
August	19 July 2002	22 July 2002	Sun 4 August 2002
September	23 August 2002	26 August 2002	Sat 7 September 2002
October	20 September 2002	23 September 2002	5-6 October 2002

[1] All dates for meetings need to be confirmed by the new Admin Officer.

[2] Subject to my relocation to Scotland

The policy will be to publish whatever is available at the deadline and post it to members about two weeks before the next meeting. That way any previews and the list of what is happening at the next meeting will arrive in time. The observant will have spotted that all the closing dates are Fridays and the posting dates the Monday two weeks before the next meeting with a few exceptions (Christmas).

Game designers are strongly encouraged to submit previews and general briefing in advance to stimulate interest in their session. Preferred format is typed in plain text, preferably by e-mail, but you can send me bits of paper, floppy disks, CDs, or whatever other medium you can get hold of. I shall award a prize for the most notable submission at the end of the year.

Articles can be sent by e-mail to: <mailto:milmud@chestnutlodge.org.uk> or by post to James Kemp, c/o 3 Gavinburn Gardens, Old Kilpatrick, Glasgow, G60 5ND.