

Peter Pig Newsletter 004 March 2012

Greetings to you all. Thanks for reading this newsletter. The newsletter is mainly concerned with Peter Pig news, but other topics do come into it.

To start on a positive note ...

Wargaming things I like to do ...

- Attack on a flank (usually get the wrong flank).
- Put lots of trees on wood templates (the other boys take them off).
- Use a raw army. Quantity not quality. (Usually gets slaughtered .. take note Darius the Meade!)
- Organise the unexpected tactic. (the men get there the fustiest with the mostest)
- Forget to occupy the objective but instead fight over some useless piece of land (What the heck.. we fought 'em hard).
- Play period music. Who can forget the samurai playtest games?
I don't win many games but it could happen.

On the bench (a book about sculpting by Nevil Shute)

Lots of SCW at the moment. This is to re-build the range which has done so much work over the last X years. At this time I am finishing off the assault guards. Next will be some militia followed by the Republican odds and ends. After this will be the "regulares"...Moroccan infantry etc.

Still waiting for the PP sculptor to do the up armoured Humvees and 2pdr AT gun.

Seems to be a huge wave of Viking stuff going on all over the place.

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Many thanks to everyone who made it to York and supported us by playing Hammerin' Iron or making a purchase and also to Lee for travelling with us.

These are Nigel's scenic shots of the Travelodge car park. I had by this time broken the exhaust by sledging in the Previa on the motoway and made up my own route around several roundabouts as the white lines were clearly of no help whatsoever.

The next show code available is XL12 for Salute. This will calculate 10% discount, please choose the "Do Not Mail" shipping option also.

Orders are only accepted via the shopping cart and ordering for collection will be automatically shut off on Monday April 16th when we start crating stock.

Julie



Our next shows of 2012 will be, Salute 21st April, Fisticuffs 5th May and then onto Colours, SELWG and Warfare.

What goes into a set of RFCM rules (criteria)

This is just a list of what RFCM rules take into account when framed out. The list is not exhaustive, but reflective of the sets produced over the years. Other rules writers have some or no intersection with what follows. This might be to do with common values of wargamers. RFCM rules do have a changeable constituency of players. To quote Abe, "people who like this sort of thing will find this the sort of thing they like".

- Accentuate 5(approx.) aspects that are peculiar or vital to that period. e.g. ammunition shortage is always a consideration in warfare, but very important to an ACW game. Other examples are period specific battle tactics such as the militia role in AWI. If a rule set includes every aspect of the battle in equal prominence nothing would ever get done. So we pull out the main points.
- Period atmosphere. Players encouraged to use period tactics that give period results.
- Game must last about 2 hours. This becomes 3hours if allowing for arrivals, chatting, packing up, post mortem and" show and tell". All important.
- Main rules must fit on a double sided playsheet.
- Players should make decisions constantly, allowances of crazy ideas with associated risks.
- Take it in turns to have a go. Often called IGO UGO. Like in chess and cards(not snap though).
- Game can be "turned" right up until the last few phases.
- Bigger reward for bigger risk. That daring flanking manoeuvre. The splitting of an army (Lee).
- Minimal record keeping, done by markers if possible.
- Players to use their units as intended (usually!). If a player paints a nice new unit of elite then he can use them as elite. No randomised armies. Player uses his own troops.
- Points system to allow players to organise their army in advance. They may of course be prevented from using all their army by being the defender, but they will get those off table units as potential reinforcements. Point systems give players a lot of enjoyment in working armies out.
- Plenty of dice. Good for tactile gratification and evening/normalising out the outcomes (be it uniform or normal).
- Interesting deployment and pre-game activities to get players into their role.
- Comprehensive victory point and analysis system. It will recognise the achievements by winner and loser. It will also graduate the level of victory from minor to astounding.
- Commander attributes that do not force a player to be who he is not. Thus an aggressive commander can be aggressive without being told not to.
- Player who benefits from an event gets a say in it by way of dice or choice.
- Original mechanisms. Provide some new experience for the player albeit might be based upon previous RFCM mechanisms.
- Victory achievable in the time span/countdown given but mutual destruction or player annihilation very very rare.

Play Day 11th February

On the 11th February Peter Pig held a play day for the purpose of play-testing the new Square Bashing rules. It would be nice if the rules were out by the end of May but we are not going to hurry.

The next project is already taking shape but the SB(square Bashing) army book and rules are near completion.

The playday was attended by 12 playtesters from the South of Britain. Other playtesters were not there due to distance. The day helped us focus on trenches, canals and areas needing exemplification(?).

Two games were played during the day. Each game had four players at the rate of two per side. This was to encourage discussion. SB is primarily intended as a one player a side game. Most of the armies were using the correct figures but some used proxy figures. This was because we wanted to try out some esoteric armies but did not have the correct figures.

The day concluded with a goodly selection of comment and thought. Following the day, playtesters sent in their thoughts, which was good.



Pre-game positioning of “Pringles.”

The SB playing area is 6 rows and 8 columns. The rows run from left to right. Each square is 6” in dimension. The game area is 4 feet by 3 feet.



Pilot's view from an Albatross.

Notice barrage markers in white. The one per square indicates that they are probably suppression barrage markers.



Attacker and defender deployed for turn 1.

This picture clearly shows the right to left method of passing over the Jaffa cakes. Players must remain seated during this game play.



Looking along the defender's deployment.

This picture clearly shows the dots used to mark out the grid. This cloth is the Games Workshop green one.

The game usually has two roads, thus creating a crossroads.

Scenery pieces occupy two squares, making each piece 12x 6 inches.



Scenery.

Constant shelling can take a toll on even the toughest player.

The off table units are reinforcements.

The defender will have a lot of reinforcements.

Things that wargamers should not get upset about, but still do ...

Wargaming can be an emotional activity for some more than others. I list a few items here that you may have seen or witnessed.

- Hey! I know I am defending, but why should I have my army size reduced?
- I rolled bad dice and lost the fight. I should have won on expected outcomes, that's not fair.
- My veterans got beat by lesser troops. That could not have happened in real life.
- The game stopped countdown before I could carry out my winning move, surely we should extend the game on this occasion?
- That is three times I have failed to get the necessary score, that is not historically possible.
- Why all the dice, can't we just have a table of outcomes so I can plan my battles?
- I know it's on the floor but it is a six!

The SB game has the following advantageous features

(If you feel these attributes are not advantageous , then fine)

- Small playing area, 4x3 feet.
- Average army size is 13 infantry battalions of 12 figures each, 6 MGs, 6 field guns and a higher command which comes to about 34 packs including markers. At March 2012 prices this is about £90. Not cheap, but still in the normal price bracket for a full 15mm battle game.
- Firing, morale and movement considered by the square. Therefore no confusion about who is affected. No micro-managing of unit positioning.
- Use of squares allows clear identification and use of support and other unit effect.
- Barrages can be clearly plotted and implemented.
- Square capacity restricts grouping/stacking of units.
- Size of table works in conjunction with game length, movement distance and victory conditions.
- Game is always defence/ attack, thus it has different aims for attacker and defender.
- Points system to plan army.

- Both players arrive with their pointed army with no other preparatory work needed, as the rules will build the scenario once the players have arrived.

The is part of the RFCM “under the bed system” whereby, once a rule set is agreed, each player can get his box/army out from under the bed and know he has all he needs for the game, without doing any scenario preparation.

- Defender has un-deployed units as reinforcements, thus they might get used/come on.
- Lots of decisions for the player to make that do affect the game and do require informed gambling. Generalship is about making the right decisions at the right time. A gamble that pays off has many fathers whilst a gamble that does not work is an orphan.
- The game is not usually “a sure thing” until the final turns.
- The grid nature means that other size figures can be used apart from 15mm. Si has used 10mm effectively with 6” squares. 18-20mm games might be OK on 6” grid too. 25-30mm troops would need 8-10” squares.



ACW re-fights.

At Peter Pig we are part of the “battle a year” scheme to mark the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War.

In 2011 we played the first battle of Bull Run /Manassas. The game ranged over 4 very large tables and included 12 players. The rules used were the RFCM “Civil war Battles”.

The day was great fun because we got to fight an actual historical battle with what was available to the Generals on that day. I learned a lot about the battle. It was good to see players needing to consider the fate of other tables whilst deciding what to do on their own table. The reason for using separate tables was so that each table could move along at the pace required by those engaged; taking breaks etc when they thought it best.

Some rule amendments were made for the day. The game was hosted by the Yeovil SSWG group at their Yeovil HQ, thanks chaps.

I am not sure what 2012 will bring, perhaps Shiloh.

These games are open to all who wish to attend. They use 15mm figures without any strict base size restriction. CWB might not be everyone’s cup of tea, but we can get the rule authors there so that any on the spot amendments can be made.

You will get a command and some rough objectives which you can follow or not. There is a crude hierarchy with an overall general who does not move figures being in command of the corps commanders.

peterpigorders@gmail.com will now get you through to Mike and Nigel in the workshop for info about your orders



Here is a picture of an AWI artillery gun being fired. This was part of a superb demonstration given by gunnery re-enactors in America last Summer. The lady on the left is Molly Pitcher, beloved of AWI ranges.



This is the anchor from the Virginia, pictured outside the museum of the Confederacy.



Still one last Rebel, holding the Marye’s Heights Road at Fredericksburg. If he does not run out of ammo, he will be there to resist the Historicon 2012 gamers coming up that slope.