

# A-D-C

AIDE-DE-CAMP: THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SBGC



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**SOUTH BAY GAMES CLUB**

All articles and content  
produced by the SBGC  
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# WELCOME TO ADC

Welcome SBGC members to the Adie-de-Camp magazine, the latest quarterly incarnation of the SBGC club magazine! In its pages you'll find articles written by our members for your entertainment.

You'll find some great articles in this issue including a scenario from Manny, Nostalgia from Nick, answers from Bob, detail on Rogers Rangers the coolest unit from the FIW and tips on making jungle terrain.

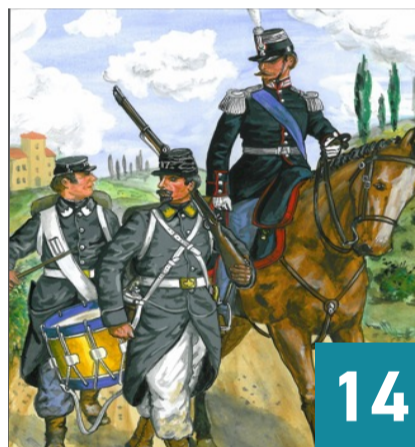
Our goal is to put an issue out every quarter so please support our efforts by contributing an article yourself. Anything works fine from tips, to After Action Reports, to scenarios you've designed to rules reviews to pictures of minis you've painted. Submissions should be sent to [magazine-submissions@sbgc.groups.io](mailto:magazine-submissions@sbgc.groups.io)

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Geoff



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**CREDITS**

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# The French and Indian War: Roger's Rangers

By Stephen Freedman



In the last quarter Magazine, I described my initial foray into creating forces for the French and Indian War. One of reasons for finding this worthy of pursuit was the discovery of the origins of special forces and how this has influenced modern day development of the SAS, US Rangers, and similar elite units of modern war.

The two main protagonists, the French and British regular infantry, were highly trained in linear infantry tactics and were experienced fighting in the European theater. The topography in Northern Europe was often open farmland and the troops were rigidly drilled to fire volleys at each other from close range. Muskets were relatively poor weapons from several viewpoints, accuracy, range and reloading speed, which limited battlefield tactics.

The French and Indian War was a very different experience for the participating troops. The conflict covered areas of dense forest, narrow paths, rough areas of rocky terrain, extensive waterways and low density areas of population. This was ideal terrain for skirmish, ambush and surprise.

Native Americans were highly skilled in this type of warfare and so became the focus of targeted recruitment by both sides. Although the tribes worked for both sides at any particular time, there was far more empathy for the French as they had a long history of

close contacts and trade with the interior tribes, with many of the French frontiersmen marrying native Indian women. This arrangement changed the focus of warfare and gave the French considerable advantage and their allies provided elite light infantry for ambush, tracking and raiding.

In response, the British turned to the settlers living in the colonies who had experience in shooting and tracking and started recruiting small companies of men to try a fill a similar role as scouts and trackers.

A number of units were organized in New Hampshire including Gorham's Rangers and a unit organized by Robert Rogers at Fort William Henry trained to fight in the colonial Northeast, particularly in the areas of Lake George and Lake Champlain in New York.

The unit fought extensively during the war



## STANDING ORDERS, ROGERS' RANGERS MAJOR ROBERT ROGERS, 1759 (Taken from the current Ranger Handbook)

1. Don't forget nothing.
2. Have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, sixty rounds powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute's warning.
3. When you're on the march, act the way you would if you was sneaking up on a deer. See the enemy first.
4. Tell the truth about what you see and what you do. There is an army depending on us for correct information. You can lie all you please when you tell other folks about the Rangers, but don't never lie to a Ranger or officer.
5. Don't never take a chance you don't have to.
6. When we're on the march we march single file, far enough apart so one shot can't go through two men.
7. If we strike swamps, or soft ground, we spread out abreast, so it's hard to track us.
8. When we march, we keep moving till dark, so as to give the enemy the least possible chance at us.
9. When we camp, half the party stays awake while the other half sleeps.
10. If we take prisoners, we keep 'em separate till we have had time to examine them, so they can't cook up a story between 'em.



11. Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.
12. No matter whether we travel in big parties or little ones, each party has to keep a scout 20 yards ahead, 20 yards on each flank, and 20 yards in the rear so the main body can't be surprised and wiped out.
13. Every night you'll be told where to meet if surrounded by a superior force.
14. Don't sit down to eat without posting sentries.

and established a reputation for effectiveness, ferocity, ruthlessness, and undertook many missions including reconnaissance and raiding. Although they fought in many of the major battles, including the Battle on Snowshoes, Siege of Fort William Henry, Siege of Louisbourg, Peticodiac River Campaign, St Francis Raid,



and the Montreal Campaign, they suffered extensive casualties and had several reverses. The St Francis raid is the subject of the Spencer Tracy film, "Northwest Passage", an excellent movie that describes the mission against the Abenaki Indian town of St Francis. In the real world, the 200 rangers on this mission had over 50% casualties, mainly on the trek back to their base at Fort William.

The success of the original Rangers resulted in a large expansion of the concept, ultimately leading to the formation of 14 companies, each of 1200-1400 rangers including three companies of native American, Mohicans and Mohegan. Rogers becoming the Commander of the Ranger Corps.

Rogers finished the war commanding forces in the west and oversaw the surrender of French garrisons, but the ending of hostilities did not go well for Rogers. Units were disbanded as the rangers returned to their farms and settlements and he moved from the West to South Carolina and finally New York, until the independent units he commanded were disbanded. Suffering from debts from raising and equipping his independent units, debts from gambling and bad business dealings, and a number of enemies he accumulated during his time in Detroit, he narrowly avoided debtors prison by escaping to England in 1765. During this time in London he wrote two books that were very well received, "Journals", an account of his war, and

"A Concise Account of North America" making use of his knowledge of the frontier lands. He also actively campaigned for British support to explore the western frontier and search for a Northwest Passage.

Rogers successfully returned to America in 1766 with his new command but his successes were very limited as he had made enemies of Sir William Johnson (Superintendent of Northern Indians) and Thomas Gage (Commander in Chief, British forces) and was in constant conflict with both of them and their political allies. He was eventually arrested and tried for potentially conspiring with the French to create a new independent dependency. Though acquitted, his flame was slowly fading and he lost his command and spent additional time in Britain trying to reverse his fortune, though drink and debtors prison limited his ability to make any progress.



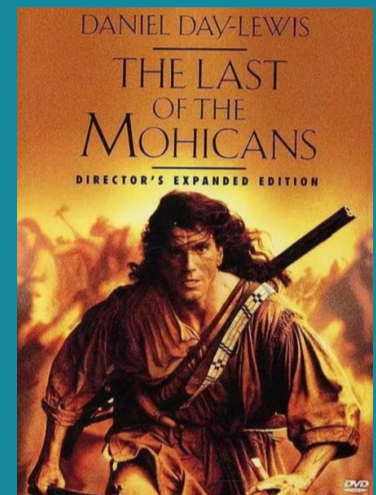
His final hurrah came during the American War of Independence where he initially tried to obtain a command in the American army, but was denied by George Washington who distrusted him from his extended time in England and his Crown appointment. He ultimately was given a command in the British forces but really never achieved any sort of success before he was retired out of the loyalist forces. His remaining years were spent primarily in England drunk, in debtors' prison and died in poverty. A remarkable man whose later years undermined his earlier success as an innovative and successful commander of men during the French and Indian War.

#### Wargaming with the Rangers

I am currently building a 24-member unit of Rangers as part of my current 28mm French and Indian war project. I hope that project will be complete mid 2024.

I did have the pleasure of participating in a 54mm Battle on Snowshoes game put on by Nick Stern. A ranger company was ambushed by Indians and French regulars, Coureurs De Bois, and Compagnies de la Marines. I had command of a unit of the rangers whose job was to move across the terrain and escape at the other end of the table, whilst under pressure from multiple French units. As is usual, Nick put on a wonderful game and my Rangers were able to reach the far side of the table, by virtue

15. Don't sleep beyond dawn. Dawn's when the French and Indians attack.
16. Don't cross a river by a regular ford.
17. If somebody's trailing you, make a circle, come back onto your own tracks, and ambush the folks that aim to ambush you.
18. Don't stand up when the enemy's coming against you. Kneel down, lie down, hide behind a tree.
19. Let the enemy come till he's almost close enough to touch, then let him have it and jump out and finish him up with your hatchet.



of their ability to move fast and make use of tree cover. I am now hooked on this period

Roger's legacy remains today and is often considered one of the fathers of light infantry tactics and innovative special forces. His Standing Orders remain a part of the current Rangers Handbook.

"Let the enemy come till he's almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it and jump out and finish him with your hatchet."  
Major Robert Rogers, 1759

# How I manage my collection (with limited space)

By Milton Soong

This article details my approach to manage my miniature collections with limited space (and funds of course).

Like most miniature gamers, I was a “wargame butterfly”. Interested in many periods, and had grandiose plans for all kinds of projects (many of which did not see the light of day). This state of affairs would’ve gone on forever until we decided to move from a relatively large house in the suburbs, to a small condo in SF City proper (I started working in the City and that commute was killing me).

What happened is that I probably shed about 85% of my miniature collections (some of the SBGC members might remember this). All I kept are some of my “core periods”. The figures mainly stayed in storage in the next couple of years as I was busy with work, and interest turned to boardgames (playing remotely) when the pandemic hit.

It is when we were opening up again when I started to have the desire to “get back into my love of miniature gaming”. Now the space constraint hasn’t gone away, so I want to come up with a rational approach on managing my collections.

What follows is my system. I might be useful to you if you are also thinking about a systematic approach to manage your collections.

## Define Your Core Periods

We wargame butterflies are interested in many periods, but if you look back on your gaming activity, there are probably <3 periods that take up a majority of your gaming resources, be it your dollars, your time, or your storage space. So the first exercise one should do is look through their collections (or future collections that they are building), and define what are your core periods.

Given that these collections have to hold your interest FOREVER, they are probably the richer/more nuanced periods with a lot of room to expand. For example we are looking at periods like WW2, Napoleonics, ACW and the like. The revolt of the Zanzibari war might sound interesting, but likely not enough “legs” to make it into your core list.

Now what about stuff you already have that is not your core period? I say it is fine to have those, but if I am space constrained, I definitely should consider selling them, or else to see if they can make it into one of the “projects” explained below.

## Define your Active Project(s)

Miniature gamers come in all types, I am definitely a “gamer” where playing the game is the thing as I do not collect figures just for collecting sake. So I am now defining what game I want to do NEXT, and that is what I call an active project (as opposed to a passive project which just sits there in storage and does not get worked on).

I usually have a game in mind (either a historical engagement, or some setup to test out a new set of rules). I would define and work on the scenario, figure out what figures I already have, what I need to purchase/get painted/or borrow from friends. Off we go, I now have a project plan until we finally have the game.

I have maybe 3x active projects on the hopper so I do not get bored. But the rule is that one project has to finish (and exit) before something else can become active.

## Managing your projects

A project for me often involved 2~3 games in that period. I try to plan the sequence of games in a “progressive” way in terms of figures/terrain needed, so I start small, and then can build up to the next engagement in the period by adding to it using my limited hobby time.

Therefore I have a pretty regimented schedule for my hobby time. It is often “painting figures needed for the next engagement, and don’t get distracted!”

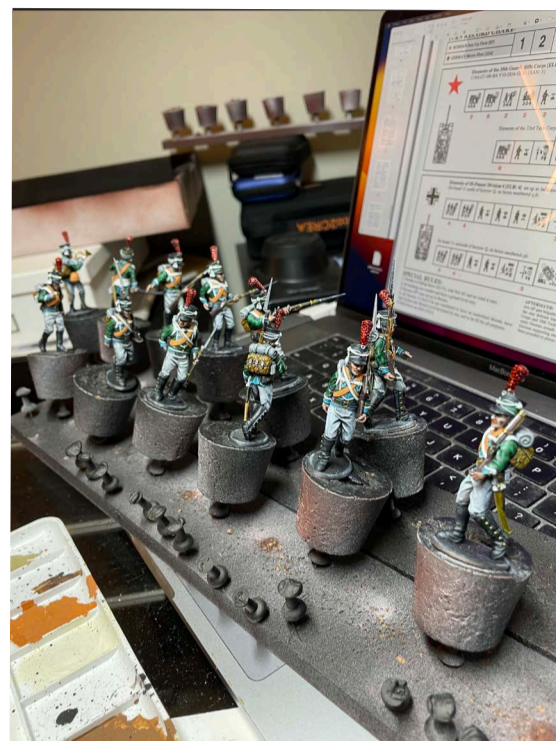
Note distraction is a real danger, as us wargamers get distracted by a lot of things (a new movie, a new book, watching your new mate’s cool project, etc.) My solution is to define a “work Sprint” for your hobby time. A work Sprint is “doing something that one has to finish without losing focus. So one Sprint might be “finish that unit of 12 Spanish Guerilla figures on the painting table”. Until I finish that unit I can’t pick up another figure, etc.

I try to keep my work sprint small and manageable (so “finish that Russian Corps of 200 figures”) is probably too broad, and one is likely to lose focus before all that is done.

Once a work sprint is done, I can then switch to another work sprint for a different active project just so I don’t get bored.

## Ending your active project

Once I played my 2~3 games that I defined the project has ended. For me that means it can go back into storage, and I get to check a box and now I am allowed to switch to a different core period, or “getting my own permission” to start



a new non core period as a reward.

(I have a spreadsheet that tracks my current projects, as well as things I want to do in the future. The “future” part actually changes a lot as old interest dies out, or new interest comes into being”.

## Corollary

1. Only buy what you need for the current project. Do not over buy, buy what you are going to work on
2. Keep it small when you start out. You might want to prioritize that Napoleonic Skirmish game that needs only 30 figures before you start shelling out for Borodino. Be kind to your wallet and your storage space.
3. Rely on your friends. Just because you love a period and want to play with it doesn’t mean you have to buy all the figures if someone at the club already has tons of those figures (one reason I don’t own any WW2 or Indian Mutiny figures). Plan a game with your mates, I am sure they will be happy to get their long ignored figures onto the table as you do!
4. Think long and hard before you commit to a brand new period. As yourself, is there enough leg in the period, and enough interest on your part to commit to a project of 2~3 games? Only commit if the answer is yes.
5. Pruning. If you think you already “gamed out” a period, and it is not one of your core periods that’ll keep you entertained at a future date, it might be time to sell them. (better yet, foresee this and don’t get into it in the first place!)

**Personal Example**

My core periods (basically what I have left after the "great purge") These I will keep forever and likely keep me entertained for all times to come:

- Ancient/Medieval (28mm Timurid Mongols, Ottoman Turks, Crusaders, and Saracens)
- Napoleonic (10mm for mass battles and 40mm for skirmish)
- Colonial (28mm Sudan and Northwest Frontier)

My Non core periods (I still want to game them, but they might have a limited shelf life)

- Italian Wars (15mm)
- WW2 FOW stuff (recently sold on so that ended)
- WW2 Skirmish in 28mm (Desert war)
- Samurai Skirmish in 28mm (have enough for a small game, if I like it enough they might get promoted to the core period list)
- Lord of the Ring in 28mm (got enough evil for a small game, need to address the good forces).

My current active projects are my 15mm Italian War and 28mm Ottomans. The Ottoman will have a big upcoming game of Nicopolis, and I am still formulating my next Italian War battles. Another 2 or so Italian War battles, it is probably due to go back into inactive state and I will bring out my Colonial for a spin.

# Why I Love My 1/72 Plastics

By Nick Stern



## 1. Nostalgia Factor

I was around 11 years old when my local toy store began carrying the Airfix HO boxes. Each box sold for 50 cents and my weekly allowance was \$1.00. Perfect! I could buy the 8th Army box vs the Afrika Korps box one week, Union ACW vs CSA the next, etc. Who bothered to paint them? Not me. I didn't even use rules back then. There were also the Rocco trucks for half a buck, sometimes more for AFV support.

## 2. Price

Boxes of plastic 1/72 cost more than 50 cents now, but they are still a good deal. A box of 50 figures generally sells for \$10 - \$15. Shipping on eBay, as we all know, can really drive the price up, so I tend to go with sellers who combine shipping costs. Even if you do not use half the figures, it's still a great deal.

## 3. Variety and Quality of Poses

I do not know much about the casting process, but plastic figures tend to be more anatomically correct and offer more realistic poses than metal figures. Also, swords and bayonets tend to be realistically scaled and will not break off if you drop them on the floor, but they might chip off their coat of paint. More on that below.

## 4. Painting

There used to be a problem with paint chipping off the soft plastic miniatures, but properly prepped and primed, this is no longer a problem. Correct prepping consists of soaking the figures in dish washing liquid overnight. Chris Salander recommends adding some vinegar to the dish washing liquid. It cannot hurt. Prime with one of the many spray paints that adhere to plastic. I recently tried a white primer used for car engines and it worked great.

## 5. Goldilocks Factor

I find the 1/72 and 20mm figures are just the right size. Easier to paint than 15mm, and not as demanding as 28mm. Also, a 1/72 unit takes up less room on the game table than 28mm, allowing more room for maneuvering.

## 6. Weight

As I get older, I can feel it in my back when I load my car with metal miniatures of all scales (I still have lots of those too). When I lift a container of plastics, there is no strain on my body. Also, there's less chance of breakage in transporting your containers.

## 7. Vehicles and Terrain

No problem finding transportation and AVF support for your 1/72 infantry. There are lots of available models, especially with the growth of 3D printings. Likewise, since 1/72 is close to HO scale, there are plenty of model railroad buildings, both plastic and card, available. If you prefer your buildings slightly under scale, you can go down to 15mm. I find that the Blue Moon 18mm buildings work perfectly with my 1/72 figures.

## 8. Challenges

Despite the ever-increasing number of new sets of 1/72 miniatures in all historic periods, there are some periods and units that are not covered by the available sets on the market. There are two ways around this. One is to use metal 20mm figures to fill in the gaps, the other is to get creative and do some figures conversions. I find head swaps fairly simple, especially when both the body and the head are available from the same manufacturer. Recently, I found I could use dried lentils for the berets of my Carlist infantry.

## Recommended Links:

Plastic Soldier Review: <http://plasticsoldierreview.com/> is indispensable. It is regularly updated and shows the contents of each pack they review. Most importantly, it gives a guide to the relative size of the figures.

Black Watch Miniatures: <https://www.black-watch-miniatures.de/> The Europeans take the 1/72 scale seriously. This site offers hard to find miniatures from Ancient Rome to WW2, with all the little European wars in between. It even offers figures for Wellington in India.

Miniatures 1/72 Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2110063959270929> An example of the European love for the scale. You could swear that some of the paint jobs are 54mm!

# Run Through the Jungle: Making Jungle Scatter

by Kevin Van

Despite how much everyone else seems to complement them, I'm very unsatisfied with the first set of jungle scatter terrain I made. I made them on the cheap, I didn't paint the trees to look less plastic-y, and I based everything on thick cardboard, I think they're horrendous and it's been a goal of mine to remake them, so here's a tutorial on how I should've done it the first time.



First, I grabbed terrain bases. My original bases were made out of 2 layers of cardboard glued together. It was way too thick for a base (8-10mm), it warped easily, and just looked awful. This time I'll be using 3mm MDF, but you can use things like plasticard, basswood, EPVC sheets, etc.

To make them transition a bit more smoothly into the game mat, I'm going to bevel down the edges a bit, then I'm going to hit them with brown spray paint.



Next I'm gonna need a lotta flocka.

The first image is my fine jungle foliage, this was made by mixing equal parts fine foam flock, coarse foam flock, 2mm static grass, a brown tone herb (Oregano), a green tone herb (Parsely), and 3 shades of green sawdust flock.

The second image is my coarse jungle foliage. I made it by mixing craft moss, craft lichen, and 3 shades of clump foliage into a blender.

You don't need to use as much stuff as I did for these recipes, but the variation in texture and color will make things look much better, so if you don't wanna go all out like I did, I still advise at least mixing 2-3 things instead of using just 1. That's a mistake I made in my first attempt at making jungle scatter, and it really looks worse for it.



Next, I hit the MDF bases with a 50/50 water/PVA solution, and cover them in my fine foliage mix. You'll notice that in the above picture, I also drilled 1/8in holes into the base, I'll explain why in a moment.

Next, I gather the plants. I just went on amazon and ebay and bought aquarium plants, topiary balls, foliage squares, miniature palm trees, and I had a couple of normal trees left from previous projects.





Topiary balls are very cheap and you can pull the foliage out from the ball frame very easily, so those were my main source of plants/ferns.

The palm trees were cartoonishly bright, so I painted them. I'd highly recommend painting the palm trees, the plastic ones you find online stand out a lot with how fake and plastic-y looking they are.

Alright, remember those holes I drilled into the base that I mentioned a while back? You'll notice in the above pictures that some of the trees and plants have an extended section that allows them to be plugged into a hole. Drilling the holes will allow me to stab the plants into the base when I glue them, then I just snip off the excess. This gives them a bit more stability and makes them adhere to the base a bit better.

Then I take my coarse foliage mix, some 50/50 water/PVA, and glue them onto bits of the base, on top of the fine foliage mix, but not covering it entirely. Use them to hide the transition from tree/plant to ground, it'll help things blend a bit better.

Last steps would be to just seal this all down with 1-2 coats of a 20/80 PVA/water mix sprayed from a squirt bottle, glue on some tufts, and then hit the plastic plants with a wash to tone down their colors a bit more.

And we're finished! Rather easy. The longest part is just waiting for the watered down PVA glue to dry so you can move onto the next step.

I wrote this for Nick on his request and I hope you find it useful, if you have any questions you know where to find me! Until next time folks!



I then grabbed those various plastic plant materials, and glued them onto the bases using super glue. I used hot glue at first but found that hot glue was not strong enough and a lot of the trees would just pull right off.



# Miniature Gallery

*Miniatures owned by club members*



*Greeks for Peloponnesian War  
by John Scruggs*



*Gunfighter  
by Alan Sissenwein*

*Seven Years War Wagons  
by Manny Granillo*



*Cold Harbor Mercenaries  
By Geoff Barrall*



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# Battle of Poti

## November 13th, 1809

By Manny Granillo (HR Games)



In August 1809 a Russian army under Major General Prince Orebliani began laying siege to Poti. To relieve the siege, an Ottoman Army under the Serasker of Trabizon was landed on November 11, 1809, and began approaching Poti. Orebliani left a covering force at Poti, and went to meet the Serasker with a 7,000 man Russo-Georgian force. Thirteen miles from south of Poti, the Ottomans made a fortified camp to await reinforcements. Orebliani attacked the camp on November 14, 1809.

### Scenario

This is not intended as an historical order-of-battle. I could find limited information on the troops present. This order-of-battle reflects the overall numbers and types of combatants, modified to allow some play balance, avoid overcrowding the table, and reflecting the miniatures available. Please modify this to your taste, space, and availability of miniatures.

**Weather Conditions:** Clear

### Special Rules

The gametable used foamboard insulation under the table covering in an attempt to model the actual topology. With this method, Units are nearly always moving on hills.

As a house rule, the -2 inch movement penalty for hills was not used.

The 20% melee penalty was applied if the defender was on a higher contour than the attacker.

The game starts with the 0800-1300 Day Segment.

The Russians have crossed the stream and are preparing to attack the Ottoman army.

The Ottoman artillery is emplaced (light cover) and cannot be moved during the game.

### Victory Conditions:

- 2 points for each enemy flag/color captured.
- 3 points for each enemy Unit Routed (Conscript or worse).
- 5 points for each enemy Unit Routed (Veteran or better).
- 3 points for each enemy Leader wounded.
- 5 points for each enemy Leader killed.
- 10 points for Russians capturing the Turkish artillery.
- 10 points for Ottoman men controlling the bridge over the stream

### The Map

The forests are light woods.  
Stream is small. (-2" to movement). The terrain contours are shown on the game map

### Russian Forces

The Russian deployment is within 12 inches North of the stream. (The map shows a notional deployment used in playtesting.)

Major General Prince Orebliani ( Desplicable: F)  
ADC (Despicable: F)

Russian First Division (Career: E)  
Grenadiers (Grenadier) Line (Veteran) Line (Veteran) Jagers (Conscript, Sk)  
Foot Artillery 8-guns (Veteran, Medium)

Russian Second Division (Despicable: F)  
Grenadiers (Grenadier) Line (Veteran) Line (Veteran) Jagers (Conscript, Sk)  
Foot Artillery 4-guns (Veteran, Medium, Licorne)

Georgian Auxiliaries Division (Princess Nino of Mingrelia Career: E)  
Georgian Auxiliaries (Militia) Georgian Auxiliaries (Militia) Georgian Auxiliaries (Militia) Georgian Auxiliaries (Militia)

Russian Cavalry Division (Career: E)  
Cuirassiers (Grenadier, Heavy, Sh) Cossacks (Militia, Light, Sk)  
Cossacks (Militia, Light, Sk) Cossacks (Militia, Light, Sk) Cossacks (Militia, Light, Sk)

**Ottoman Forces**

Serasker of Trabizon (Despicable: F) [Deployed on high ground in Ottoman Center.]

ADC (Despicable: F) Foot Artillery, 8-guns (Veteran, Heavy)

Left Wing Cavalry (Apathetic: G) [Deployed to the right of the high ground.] Sipahis (Conscript, Heavy, Lance, Sh) Mamelukes (Elite, Light, Lance, Sk) Mamelukes (Elite, Light, Lance, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr, Medium, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr, Medium, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr, Medium, Sk)

Infantry Division (Despicable: F) [Deployed within 15 inches of the Ottoman Artillery Battery.]

Janissaries (Conscript, Sk) Janissaries (Conscript, Sk)

Martolo (Conscript) Martolo (Conscript) Derbent (Conscript)

Derbent (Conscript) Sekhans (Conscript) Sekhans (Conscript)

Sekhans (Conscript) Sekhans (Conscript)

Right Wing Cavalry (Apathetic: G) [Deployed to the left of the high ground.] Sipahis

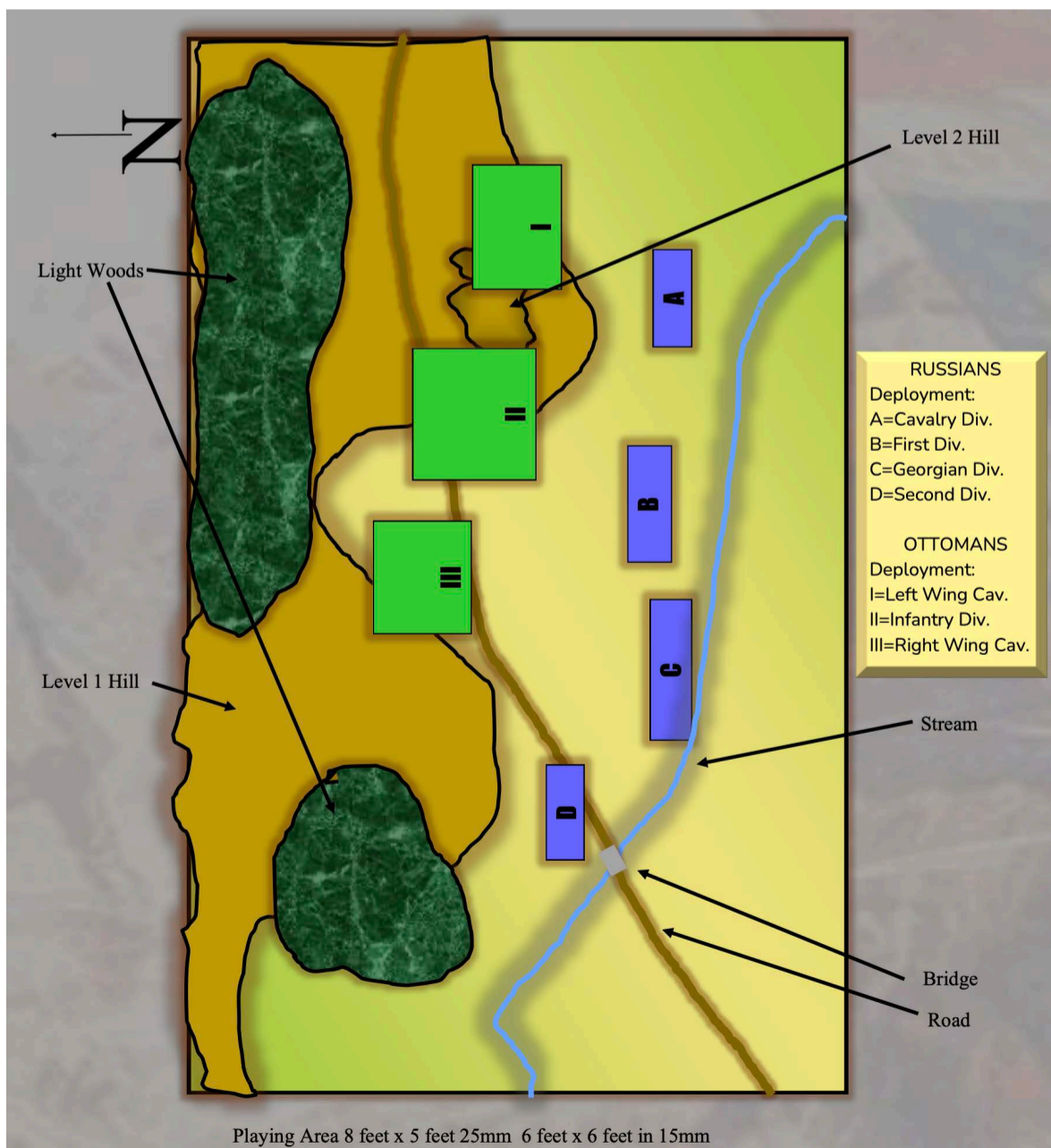
(Conscript, Heavy, Lance, Sh) Mamelukes (Elite, Light, Lance, Sk) Mamelukes

(Elite, Light, Lance, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr,

Medium, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr, Medium, Sk) Yorouks (Landwehr, Medium, Sk)

**Comments:**

There is limited information on the battle of Poti. The Ottomans were a relief army trying to lift the siege of Poti. Prince Orebliani withdrew a portion of the besieging army to prevent the relief force from reaching Poti. He was joined by Princess Nino of Mingrelia and the Georgian Auxiliaries. The terrain and orders-of-battle are notional. This scenario has been played with groups of 2-6 players. The scenario usually broke into three separate fights: On the Ottoman left, it was Cavalry versus Cavalry on the Ottoman Left, Infantry versus Infantry and on the Ottoman right, it was Cavalry versus Infantry. In play, the Russians were most successful by being very aggressive in the Center and the Russian Left. Advancing in Line with artillery support usually keeps the Ottomans off balance. The poor Ottoman Leadership and low morale grade troops makes them very cumbersome to handle. The Ottomans were more succesful by having their Cavalry attack in waves. Sending in only a portion in each attack, and keeping the remainder ready to follow-up any successes the previous attack may have generated. This scenario kept six players engaged and had a lot of action for everyone.



# Do It Yourself Markers

by Pete Michels

**I've never been one to go out and buy the special tokens or markers to show various states of morale or casualties on my model soldiers. Instead, I decided to create my own using simple craft paint, white glue, some lava gravel (white) that I had laying around, some ballast, yellow and red grass mats, and medium green grass from Woodlands Scenics.**

Depending on what type of terrain you want your markers to represent, they can be green, brown, or gray for fields, mud/desert, or urban. Be creative.

Materials needed are:

1. Craft circles - I bought these in bulk. They are about the size of a penny. I've added some coins to show the size relationship. See the photos.
2. Hunters Green Acrylic craft paint - The cheapest you can find.
3. Woodland Scenics medium green grass.
4. White glue.
5. Woodland Scenics gravel (medium or your choice).
6. Woodland Scenics colored yellow and red mats (these are small).

I've also included some small shell holes to indicate where a WW1 bombardment happened. They can also model shell scrapes. You will need some non-shrinking spackle to build up the edges. The wood circles under these are approximately 1".



## Instructions for morale and casualty markers

1. Paint the circles your color of choice. I spray painted mine in bulk. Let dry.
2. Apply glue to the top and dip the circle into a small box with your flocking. Let dry.
3. Once dry, glue white gravel (my preferred choice) or red mat or yellow mat. Let dry.

If you are making shell holes...

1. Paint them brown. Let dry.
2. Spackle the ring to your satisfaction. Let dry. You can seal the spackle with Modge Podge or other sealer, if you want. Let dry.
3. Spray or hand paint brown. Let dry.
4. Optional - I dowse the shell holes with brown ink. Let dry.

The last marker I've created is for hidden movement, or fog of war use.

1. These are on 1" square markers,
2. Same instructions as the circles, but only painted and flocked.
3. I painted white numbers on all 4 sides of the square.



I use these markers for hidden elements on the table, or fog of war. I created a concept (for me anyways, to put horizontal and vertical rows every 12" on a game table. That way opponents can indicate where their forces are, such as: AT gun in hedge 7" to the left of marker 23.

I use these markers in almost all my games for indicating morale levels

# Bob's Corner of Obscurities

By Bob Burke

Nick Stern asked the following questions:

- 1) Did the Neapolitan Grenadiers of the Royal Guard wear bearskins and fancy uniforms in the field in 1860
- 2) Is there a difference in the greatcoats worn in the field by the Neapolitan Line and Light infantry in 1860?
- 3) Can I use the same figure in greatcoat for the Neapolitan and Piedmontese line infantry?
- 4) Did all the Neapolitan infantry wear the greatcoat in the field?
- 5) Do you know of any other 1/72 or 20mm sources of figures for the period, aside from Irregular Miniatures and Lucky Toys and Waterloo 1815 plastics?

Nick,

Thanks for the questions. Whenever I have a question about the Neapolitans in the 1860 Campaign, I immediately go to Luigi Casali's book "Red Shirts." He covers the Garibaldini, the Neapolitans, the Piedmontese, and the Papal Armies of 1860. His companion book, "The Second Italian War of Independence, 1859" is another go-to book. Sadly, both books are now out of print.

1) The Neapolitan Grenadiers of the Guard did not wear a bearskin. They wore a shako. However, the grenadier company of the Royal Carabineer regiment wore bearskins. It was very similar to the bearskins of Napoleon III's Imperial Guard except that it did not have the front plate.

2) According to Casali, the line and light battalions wore the same greatcoat. The only difference was that the light battalions had yellow patches on the collar and brass buttons.

3) According to the illustrations in "Red Shirts" the greatcoats for the Neapolitans and Piedmontese infantry look very similar. Here is an illustration of Piedmontese infantry in greatcoat. Unlike the illustration, Casali describes the greatcoat as "light grey-bluish."

4) The Guard Grenadiers, the Cacciatori, and Tiragliamentari all wore a greatcoat in the field. So did the line and the cacciatori battalions. The Royal Carabineer Regiment may have worn a greatcoat since Casali states that their uniforms followed the same guidelines as the line infantry. The foreign carabineer battalions wore single breasted tunics.

5) In terms of what other companies make 20mm figures for this period, besides Irregular Miniatures, Lucky Toys and Waterloo 1815 plastics, the pickings are rather slim. Hagen Miniatures makes Piedmontese Guard Grenadiers in 20mm (could be used for Neapolitan Royal Carabineers) < <https://www.hagen-miniatures.de/test-category-21/figures-40/1st-italian-war-of-independence-risorgimento-1848-49/italian-armies/piemontese-army/piemontese-guard-grenadiers-1848.html>>.

Please send in your questions for Bob to [magazine-submissions@sbgc.groups.io](mailto:magazine-submissions@sbgc.groups.io)



# Letters Page : The Cases for and Against Activation Rolls

## Are Activation Rolls Realistic?

I have a beef with games that are overly-reliant on activation rolls. I understand the purpose of them. They are supposed to account for the random events that might cause a unit to not go into action on a given turn. The problem with them is that rules systems vary widely on how they are used. Many rules systems do not use them at all. Some use them sparingly, and some make you roll for every stinking unit on every stinking turn. Those are the most annoying and I would argue, the most unrealistic. Picture this, you are a professional soldier. You have trained for this. You have fought many battles. You are all dressed up in your uniform. You came a long way to get to this battle. Your commander placed you in this precise spot for a reason. Your arms are at the ready. The enemy is directly in front of you. They are already attacking you. People are fighting and dying all around you. It is time for you to take action and what do what you have been waiting your whole life to do, and what do you do? Stand there like an idiot doing absolutely nothing while the enemy annihilates you. How realistic is that? Especially when it happens to the same unit for several turns in a row or to the majority of an army at once. Surely at some point they are going to fight, not just stand still and get wiped out without even trying to offer resistance. Logically, if there is an enemy directly in front of you, you would fight them, even if given no other command by your superiors.

Consider some of the game situations I have been in. I had a cannon with thousands of enemies in front of them at point blank range. It failed activation rolls eight times in a row and was overrun and destroyed. In another game, I had soldiers who succeeded in the daunting task of scaling a ladder and reaching the top of the wall of a fortress. Then they failed their activation roll and sat there with their fingers in their noses while the enemy with the enemy right in front of them. If you came that far, wouldn't you fight once you finally got to the top? No, the rules said they tried to go back down the ladder and self-destructed. What? Why would anyone do that? In still another game, I had veterans of the entire Napoleonic wars. They were elite troops of Napoleon's old guard. They still had to activate every single turn like a scared, unbloodied recruit. They were fighting for their survival, and they stood still and did nothing until they were killed. Finally in another game, I had a cavalry unit that was part of a wedge of thousands of horses all galloping at full speed towards a stationary enemy. One horse failed morale on the far side of the formation way out of my sight. The entire army came to a grinding halt, broke morale, destroyed their own forces or fled the field. I would argue that none of these scenarios was historically accurate. They are hardly even believable or plausible.

I have heard the argument that these activation rolls are supposed to represent equipment failures, breakdown in command, cowardice or other random events that cause the unit to not move or attack. I would argue that they happen far too often in some rules systems to be realistic. I have seen rules where any roll of 5 or 6 on a D6 is a failure to activate or some combination of morale checks, initiative, and activation rolls make it nearly impossible for anyone to move or fight. These are not realistic. In a real battle, most units are going to move and fight constantly unless something extraordinary happens. The rule should be, when in doubt, continue to carry out the last order your unit was given until told to do otherwise. If rules want to include a provision for failure to act then they should make specific random event charts for things like poor leadership, mechanical failure, desertion, etc. Don't try to sum up all battlefield problems in one generic roll that happens all too often to represent real battles.

In original Dungeons and Dragons, for example, a failure was called a fumble. There was only a 1 in 20 chance of this happening. Percentile based RPGS usually retained this 5% margin of failure or something similar give or take a few modifiers. Why is it that so many historical miniatures game rules have such a high chance of not activating above and beyond getting initiative and the chance to miss? Give me a believable reason why my troops did not do what they came to the battle to do, not just an obscure activation failure roll that happens far too often to be realistic. I am not saying eliminate the chance to activate completely (although games that do are a lot more fun to play), but make those chances very small and occurrences fairly rare because most troops are going to fight, not just stand still and be killed without offering any resistance. That is just common sense.

Perhaps a remedy to these rules' problems would be a one-time activation roll at the beginning of a battle or only make an activation roll when something very unusual happens like a commander dies, a natural disaster, or a large group of enemy reinforcements arrive. Having every unit roll for activation on every turn is tedious and can be quite frustrating for players who are unable to move or do anything for several turns. If for no other reason, activation rolls should be limited just for playability and enjoyment of the game.

Richard Di Giacomo

### **The Case for Activation Rolls and Other Randomness**

Yes, I understand the frustration. A few years back I played a couple of German Tanks in WWII game with intense fog and for the whole game my tanks couldn't see or do anything for three hours. Who is that fun for? Well, actually me. Even though I didn't have a lot to do my fellow players were able to use the fog effectively to cross a river and assault a well dug in position on the other side. It was nail biting stuff hoping our guys could make it over the river without being spotted and without the Fog of War the scenario would have been impossible. With no fog and free movement the attacking force would always have been eliminated by the defender in short order.

So that's the thing. Are you looking for a game where you move some soldiers around with parade ground precision every time (nothing wrong with that) or more of a tactical simulation. I always prefer the later even when maybe I have less to do. Many historical battles like Isandlwana and Antietam just can't work at all without some kind of randomness applied to activation to simulate the issues of the day. With automatic coordination and movement the attacking force wins ever time in both of these famous and often replayed battles. The defender would have no chance at all.

Another example is that I recently ran the Battle of Brunanburh (the battle that united England in the Dark Ages). It starts as two lines facing each other, one of Anglo Saxons and the other of the Alliance of Kingdoms against them. During the charge the activation rolls of the Hail Caesar rules system broken up and staggered the lines creating realistic tactical choices for both sides. Without the activation rolls everybody would have moved the same amount and you might as well have lined up the soldiers in the center of the table and just started from there, for me not that exciting.

Also, one point made to me in the past is that you're rolling for shooting anyway. You might make it quickly to the front but then miss every shot. Either there's randomness and you must deal with disappointment or there isn't (like chess) and you'll lose if you're not the most skilled player every time.

There no right or wrong here, just preferences but I'd take a game with a resonable amount of fog of war every time when playing a historical battle.

Geoff Barrall



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