



# Dispatches

January  
2017  
Issue No. 90

AAAAAaaaaarrrrgh! January already!

I hope you guys are finding painting easier than I.  
Never enough time.

was defeated by the half of a pig that made up a large breakfast. I settled for a sausage bap.

First game I was facing David Copperwheat from Leighton Buzzard using Tribal Mongols. Incompetence started when I invaded (The Russians have a low aggression and should not do that) making it difficult to put down terrain to cover my flanks. I then managed to cock up the dice roll for deployment and had to deploy first.

## Latest Dispatches

### Valhalla 2017— Progress!

Reminder:

Date = 18th June (Fathers' Day).

18:00 to 19:00, Saturday, 17th June we put out the tables.

I need FIRM offers to run Participation and Demo games at Valhalla 17.

Entries have been made in the Council Events diary, Facebook and a basic start on the website.

On the other hand, most of the terrain (low hills) fell in my half so I did have something to cover upon. I deployed with my mixed foot/cavalry command on my left, the C-in-C's cavalry command in the centre and my big command of Polk spearmen on the right with the horde and some light horse and cavalry sitting on a hill on my far right.

The Mongols deployed 3 commands of cavalry and light horse in front of me and a small light horse command off to my right.

I started by shoving my left forward fast with the centre echeloned to support them and the spears wheeling right to cover the flank. The Mongols sent 2 commands of to my right and pootled about in front of my left and centre.

I kept pushing forward which forced him to commit against my whole line apart from his small command. That sat on one side of a valley whilst my horde and light horse were happy to sit and watch from the other.

Eventually the frontal strength of my cavalry and spears broke the two central Mongol commands despite my left flank getting demoralised. My reserve of Germans Knights managed a lovely attack (at second attempt) on a Mongol general trampling him into the steppe. Victory to the Russians ....

Steve with the Khmer had also won against Sui Chinese and Steve with the Avars had a winning draw against Carolingian Franks.

Game 2 in the afternoon was against Don Avis from Milton Keynes who was using Seljuk Turks. He invaded me (that's better) and I managed to stick woods on both flanks to narrow the battlefield -useful as Seljuks are also a light horse army.

I deployed first and we rolled Mud for the weather. This is interesting as Mud is bad for Knights. Fortunately my Ger-

Farnborough Wargames Society presents:

## VALHALLA 17

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June  
10:00 to 16:30

Entry £3.00  
(+Concessions)  
Farnborough  
Community Centre  
(Elles Hall)  
Off Meadon Avenue  
Farnborough  
GU14 7LE

**Treat Aid**

Come and see games being played in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Enjoy:

- Participation Games
- Demonstration Games
- Bring & Buy
- Trade Show
- Refreshments

(Car parking at reasonable rates)

[www.fwgs.org.uk/valhalla](http://www.fwgs.org.uk/valhalla)

We have some responses from the trade already. More on the way no doubt.

## Competition—Marc Reports

{Warning: Some fans of the Incompetents' Spot may find the following disturbing}

On Saturday 14th January I took part in the annual one day DBMM Ancients competition at Milton Keynes. This year the period was 15mm Dark Ages/Early Medieval armies (476 AD to 1071 AD). In this competition you can enter as a team of three, or if like me you are a billy no mates, you get brigaded with two other lucky players.

This time I was dragooned into the Colchester team with two pleasant characters called Steve. We met before the first game and agreed that our target was to avoid being bottom and getting to mid table would be excellent. I was using an early Russian army (Cavalry, Spearmen and some light horse), one Steve had Khmer (complete with a lovely cardboard model of Ankor Wat) and the other had Avars.

The trip up was quick and I met up with Mike Bowles from the WAR (Reading team) to find breakfast and a tea. Mike

Sunday Meetings Dates	
2017	
Done	30 Jul
26 Feb	20 Aug
19 Mar	24 Sep
23 Apr	29 Oct
21 May	26 Nov
18 Jun	17 Dec

Website address: [www.fwgs.org.uk](http://www.fwgs.org.uk)

man Knights are allowed to dismount as Heavy Infantry and are then okay (though less useful as a reserve). Don however had Agulami who count as Knights, but cannot dismount. This confused him

Being not very original, I deployed as before: Mixed command on the left, C-in-C mounted command (with the dismounted knights) in the centre and the spears on the right with a few cavalry covering their flank. Don deployed with a light horse command on his right, cavalry/light horse in the centre, agulami/light horse on his left centre and a small light horse command on the far left.

My line filled the gap between the woods on both sides, so I advanced. Don could not think of any good alternatives so advanced to meet me. This resulted in a large clash of my cavalry/spears versus cavalry and light horse plus Agulami in the mud. This could and did have only one result victory to me ...

Meanwhile the Steves both drew their games (Steve with Khmer took on an Avar army in terrain where not much happened, the other Steve had an epic fight with even losses against an army of I think some sort of Arabs).

At the end of the day we were first equal with the Reading Team, and won on points difference (or something like that). So we won the day 1st out of 12 teams ....

I suspect I will now have to be drummed out of incompetents corner ...

{Ed—counselling is available for readers}

## SAGA—Neil Updates us.

# Age of the Wolf SAGA Campaign Readiness for Final Battles

SAGA Age of the Wolf is a basic 6 Season, round, campaign game. After starting with pristine 4 point war bands the Warlords have gained and lost warriors, trusted Hearthguards and undervalued Levies. Victory being the kingship being vested in the Atheling Warlord with the greatest Campaign Victory Points!

Of the 6 Warlords that started the campaign season 3 have now been killed and been replaced by their heirs. Hence in Kent 'Son of Bruno', in Wessex Cynric; son of the wicked Cerdic, and in East Anglia Harald Sihtrics-son.

The loss of a warlord allows re-throws for Traits etc. but also removes a point each of Land, Wealth and Reputation, which late in the campaign seasons could see Atheling status lost, below the key 15 Power level, and any contention for the kingship slip from a families grasp. But as has been seen a

'dead' warlord on the table, may well survive injured or uninjured, just feigning death! The Dice throws of Fate can be both Cruel and Strange.....

As you can see in the Tally Chart the war bands are now quite different to one another, as are the Warlords, with a variety of Traits and Special Rules.

Just taking a look at the largest, Harald Sihtricsson, Anglo-Danish and the smallest Taffy of Powys warbands illustrates many of the variations.

Taffy is motivated by Gold, Dragon's Hoard, Wealth. He is *War-Toothed*; an experienced warrior who cunningly can choose the size of a battle, *Mighty*; truly awesome in combat so has 6 Attack Dice and *Bravery*; will not tire easily and so ignores the first *Fatigue* in any turn.

Like all three Warlords he began with 2 Land, 2 Wealth and 2 Points of Reputation. But through successful Raiding and feats of warfare has increased his Wealth to 5 and Reputation to 4.

But success has come at quite a price, and his war band still stands at 4 points despite post battle recruitments. And a 'weak' 4 points at that, as he only has 11 Warriors, rather than the full 16 of 2 points of warriors, and is down 2 levy down from their full strength of 12.

Nevertheless his Points plus Units on roster gives Taffy a Power of 16 and hence is an Atheling, and a contender to win the kingship!

Looking at Harald he is more nobly motivated by *Good Reputation*! As a *Hero* he generates 3 Saga dice, being *Resolute* if his men loose a melee within M of him they will stand firm and push back the winners! Whilst as a *Hard Ruler* he gets 4 extra Levy 'volunteers' each season and his peasants never dare Revolt! Harald has had some success and he now has 3 points each of Land, Wealth and Reputation. Whilst his *Hard Rule* has grown his war band numerically to 3 Hearthguard, 11 Warriors and some 36 Levy. But Fate has yet to provide for any Levy to be elevated to Warrior status.

Coming to the 6th Season Northumbria, Wessex and Mercia chose to *Defend*. With Powys, Kent and East Anglia taking the opportunity for further Raiding. This being the last Season before the king will be proclaimed, being the *Atheling* with the greatest *Campaign Victory Points*.

*Defend* allows a warlord to gain +1 Wealth and add to their manpower.

*Northumbria* choose to add 4 Levy to the troops recruited after his last battle giving a unit of 8 Levy; having found the weakness of not having any ranged weapons available during some Season 5 games.

*Wessex* had been reduced to 1 point of Wealth by the end of season 5 and was therefore faced with being able to field only one unit of warriors. *Defend* gave Wessex the Wealth to restore the second unit of 10 Warriors to its battle line, and by adding 2 Hearthguard reinforcements bring a

England circa 750 AD						
End of Season 5	Graham	Neil	Alan	Alec	Andrew	Miles
Warband/Territory	Powys Welsh	Northumbria Viking	Kent Saxon	Wessex Saxon	Mercia Anglo Dane	East Anglia Anglo Dane
Warlords Name	Taffy of the Valleys	Eric Odenson *	Son of Bruno	Cynric **	Ethelbald	Harald Sihtricsson
Kings Domain - Land						
Dragon's Hoard - Wealth	x	x	x			
Skald's Song - Reputation				x	x	x
Trait 1	War-Toothed	War-Toothed	God's Eye	Quarrelsome	War Crafty	Resolute
Trait 2	Mighty	Landwaster	Oathsworn	Noble Mien	<i>Learned</i>	<i>Hard Ruler</i>
Trait 3			Blood Feud **	Blood Feud *		
1 x extra Special Rule	Bravery	Son of Odin + Bravery	Scout	Great Ruler	Son of Odin	Hero
Starting Land, Wealth, Reputation 6 + any bonus Traits				Total of all to be added to Starting Power.		
Land (Levy)	2	2	2	2	2	3
Wealth (Warriors)	5	5 +1	1	1 +1	6 +1	3
Reputation (Hearthguard)	4	4	2	2	1	3
Units, starting at (4) + any extra figures from Traits.				Units to be added to Starting Power		
1	2 Hearthguard	3 Berserkers HG	5 Hearthguard	10 Warriors	7 Hearthguard	3 HG Dane Axes
2	6 Warriors	6 Warriors + War Banner	5 Hearthguard	10 Warriors ®	8 Warriors	5 Warriors
3	5 Warriors	6 Warriors	12 Levy Bow	1+2 H'thguard	8 Warriors	6 Warriors
4	10 Levy Bow	4 Warriors	11 Levy Bow	7 Levy Bow	10 Levy Bow	12 Levy Bow
5	2 Hearthguard	+8 Levy Bow			+6 Warriors	11+1 Levy Bow
6						12 Levy Bow
Hearthguard, Warriors, Levy (Total)	4, 11, 10 (25)	3, 16, 8 (27)	10, 0, 23 (33)	3, 20, 7 (30)	7, 22, 10 (39)	3, 15, 35 (53)
Total Unit Points Value.	4	3	5	4	5	6
Power (Total of 6+7) Atheling* +	16*+	17*+	9	10	15*	15*
Campaign Victory Points (winning a battle)	5	12	2	7	1	1
SEASON 6 ACTION →	Raid	DEFEND	Raid East Anelia	DEFEND	DEFEND	Raid Powys

3 man Hearthguard unit to Cynric's side. So restoring both his Power and war band strength.

Mercia although in a healthy position chose to Defend! Being *Learned and Defending* allowed Ethelbald to raise a new unit of 6 warriors. So elevating him to a Power of 15 and Atheling status, but with only 1 campaign point. Perhaps the cunning Ethelbald was hoping the leading Warlords would fall on each other and any loss of their status might give a lower ranked Atheling the opportunity of being proclaimed king!

In choosing to Raid the other Warlords sought Wealth and the opportunities to kill a rival Atheling and so gain advantage in the struggle to become the King.

So with 3 Games to be fought there is much to fight for...

Taffy Powys (Graham) Raiding Northumbria (Neil)  
 Son of Bruno (Alan) Raiding East Anglia (Miles)  
 Harald Sihtricsson (Miles) raiders clashing with Taffy Powys raiders (Graham)

### Dice—They Don't Balance out during a Game

I was recently intrigued by some comments at the club which appeared to indicate that at least some folks believe that dice throw results balance out during the game.

Truth is that in a typical game of a Friday night, there are very few games where there is any realistic chance of the dice balancing out.

The problem is two-fold:

1. the games are not big enough to allow a decent number of engagements of sufficient importance to give a chance that the dice can balance out.
2. Many sets of rules do not accord dice results with equal impact on the outcome of the game. For example, the initial dice. I can prove it if you like. Initial throws in a melee might be more important than the later ones because the unfortunate player (Allan, say) is weakened at the start and so is unlikely to be able to hit back as hard as he is being hit.

So there! Nah nah ne nah nah!

## Napoleonics— Sunday

The January Sunday game was a significant (60-unit) Napoleonic game. More bone-crunching than significant you might say.

The French took on Russians. Date was set around 1807—so it would be an engagement in Prussia (but to add interest, I lobbed a brigade of Austrian infantry in with the Russians (Tom commanded those as part of his force).

I offer Tom's account of the battle from the Russian viewpoint (which was a significant distance from any danger for most of the game):

We lost the centre pretty bad but the Russian flank under Jasmine seemed to be the Russian steamroller.

The French retreated in sheer fear from the superior Austrian army under the command of the emperor himself. The battle sadly ended sue to night fall before a single Austrian gun was fired but the next day could see yet another resounding Austrian success.

French win centre  
Russian win their right  
Overall Austrian victory

Least shots fired per dead foe + most land gained + Least dead men for dead foe

Ian on the other hand took the following view from the French Side:

Some highlights:

1. Russian general sneaking on an extra infantry brigade, yes, not just an odd battalion but a whole brigade!
2. The amazing "Allan" impression by Tom with the Austrians.
3. My skilful handling of a brigade of cavalry

I am sure Jasmine would like to point out that Ian's handling of that brigade of cavalry included them being exterminated by her forces for very little Russian loss.

However, the full force of the French army fell on the Russian centre. Loz was up to his nostrils in superb French infantry as he tried to hold the Russian centre long enough for Jasmine's attack to break through.

I umpired. I therefore emerged from the game as the winner.

The rules used were the latest version of my own set.

Several complex situations were encountered but the rules seemed to cope well enough. In fact, Loz was inspired to write some thoughts on the next stage in the rules which adds some further capabilities for the troops. February Issue!

The picture shows the situation where the French (fighting right to left) were breaking through the Russian centre, the Austrians and supporting cavalry were moving up (top-left of picture) and Jasmine's Russian attack was moving through a defile (bottom centre) ready to encounter a second brigade of Russian dragoons after they mullah'd the first such brigade.

