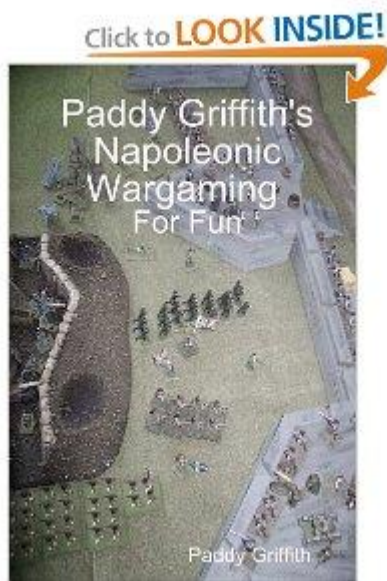


Napoleonic Wargaming for Fun by Paddy Griffith

Review by Paul Le Long

Paddy Griffith was one of the great wargames innovators who in many ways challenged accepted ideas about how wargames should be played – so it seems a little odd to be reviewing one of his books in a section of this blog dedicated to reviews of “classic” works on wargaming.



This new edition – part of John Curry’s History of Wargaming Project – contains a new introduction by Arthur Harman, one of Griffith’s fellow iconoclasts. And very interesting it is too. The new edition also has an updated bibliography, again written by Harman.

But the heart of the book, as in the original edition published in 1980, is seven sets of rules for the Napoleonic period. The author presents a different set of rules for games set at skirmish, battalion, divisional and army level. This was, and still is, a really innovative approach to a single period and it helps the wargamer to tackle different tactical problems by setting up games at different command levels.

There is also the Generalship game – which is a boardgame really which aims to recreate the decision making process at the highest level of command. We also have a map kriegsspiel game and a TEWT or Tactical Exercise Without Troops, which is basically a field walking exercise.

If you are at all interested in the Napoleonic period, then this is a must-have book. But I would recommend it anyway even if you don’t like Napoleonics because it is just so innovative and inventive – if you can apply seven different sets of rules to Napoleonics then you can do it for any period and I found that quite inspirational. The book also confronts us with the fact that regardless of what we pretend our games are, they are mostly in reality set at divisional level with a few brigades in each “army.” Griffith offers us a way to expose ourselves to the challenges of genuinely different levels of command.

Details:

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This is a John Curry reprint which is currently selling for £11.66 or US\$12.95. The original is out of print but surfaces on Amazon & eBay regularly.