

Thinking about Konigraatz Small-Scale Raid Wargames

By Rob Morgan

One of the most useful of all wargames concepts, and for most periods, is the combined operation -- a naval force and a landing party acting in concert. There's a brilliant scenario in Don Featherstone's *'Naval Wargames'* (apart from *"Scouting for Boys,"* the finest volume published in the twentieth century) called the attack on the Konigraatz batteries, take a look at it.

Of course using ships and figures and fortifications and other buildings on a wargame table can be a bit difficult in the larger scales. I can't even imagine trying to place a 28mm scale gunboat or fort, but in 1/600th it's entirely possible and very rewarding. At this point I'm reminded of an article in an early issue of *"The Foreign Correspondent"* on Garibaldi's naval invasion of Sicily, in which a landing party would have tremendous value. I'm thinking in European terms initially, but the concept's the same from Montivideo to Salonika.

Figure 1 USS Fuschia



There are two ranges which are excellent and reasonably priced, and which if carefully combined will allow combined ops to be played from 1860-1914. In the 'Peter Pig' 'Naval Riverine' range there are several useful vessels for this purpose, no.17 USS Fuschia (£3), No.46 CS Drewry (£3) and No.47 Mortar Schooner (£3) as well as a few paddle steamers. Of course Norway, Sweden and Russia all built Monitors, and No.57 USS Passaic will serve for any of those, should you desire some serious shore bombardment. The 'Tumbling Dice'

range, again in 1/600th has some splendid small rowing boats and steam pinnaces for landing the soldiery, and if you are in need of a torpedo boat or two, then the US based 'Thoroughbred Models' will come up trumps with a set of four spar TB's. Another vessel you would do well to look at is No.35 Commodore Morris a Ferryboat at £3.50; and don't forget No.60 a balloon barge at £3.

As for the troops themselves, for the earlier period, then Peter Pig's Pack's 39, infantry blocks; 40, cavalry blocks; 41, skirmishers (particularly nice); and 42, command blocks are all good value at eight for £2.30. There's a pack 10 as well of four 12pdr guns (no shields obviously) with limbers on a larger base, and these will suit almost any field gun or small howitzer weapon up to 1900 or beyond, again at £2.30 a pack. For French, Italian, Neapolitan, Austrian or Prussian and ACW (naturally!)



Figure 2 Peter Pig Infantry Block

For the later period say from 1900-1914, then turn to the 'Tumbling Dice' range, in the universal Items, there are packs such as ISL 901, in 1/600th of course, Infantry in open order, ISL 902 close order Infantry, and ISL 910, which is cavalry in shako. Nice figures, all at £1.80 a pack, and accompanied by ISL 904, support weapons, which will provide maxims, and early mg's. I like the delightful ISL 918, three artillery limbers with crews, intended for WWI, but generic, and the supply carts and wagons (4 of these) at the same price. For later field guns, the range provides ISL 1, an 18pdr; ISL 101, a German 77mm; and ISL 301, a Russian 76mm, all in packs of 6 with crew at the same price.

Figure 3 Peter Pig Heavy Fort Gun



For heavier artillery go back to 'Peter Pig' and buy a pack of 10 Carriage guns, which will do nicely for heavier artillery if needed, and they also produce a pack of eight Heavy Fort guns which will do for every imaginable purpose up to Verdun!

'Dice' have a couple of add-on's including ISL 921, Flak guns, which will in fact serve as light anti-torpedo boat weapons, or harbour defence pieces, they look just like 57mm Hotchkiss guns. There's a sandbag gun position too, which will prove useful for a command post, and in ISL 922, the same range provides four early lorries or trucks, intended for flak guns but highly convertible nevertheless. I must say, the later period option's far more attractive to me, British, French, Prussians, Russians, Swedes, for instance, but the two can be blended if

you are looking at a less technologically advanced military force facing a better one.

As buildings, Peter Pig have a coastal fort, hefty at £6, and also a street at £5 and a farm at the same price. While a glance at 'Tumbling Dice's' WWI aircraft range will provide a number of pre-WWI reconnaissance craft, don't forget the first air to air combat was in 1912. One or two items from other ranges, such as the Triton 'Narrow Seas' 1/600th ships *might* find use in the later scenario.

'Thoroughbred' do have a fair bit of stuff in the list too, but are very expensive in comparison to the others.