



***The Solo Wargaming Guide* Written by William Silvester**

A Review by Peter R. Barkworth

This book was published in 2013 and it is one that I assumed would be in almost every solo wargamer's library, along with Donald Featherstone's and Stuart Asquith's volumes on this subject. However, looking through our reviews on the SWA website I noticed it was missing from the reviews section so I thought I might give my assessment of the book in case any of our readership were unaware of the title.

Mr Silvester's book is short at only 119 pages, but it has to be said it is very well laid out and organised. Nothing is dogmatic and information is offered in a practical and helpful way. If you have never fought a campaign before, there is plenty to help you and if you are already experienced, there are some extra details that will allow you to add confusion and uncertainty to your next miniature military venture. In this respect, his solo campaign mobilisation rules can result in one side getting its troops together more quickly than another – you can imagine the advantages for that force. Ambushes are also covered in a practical and sensible style. There is a section on how to transform map movement onto the tabletop with the possibility of the enemy appearing on one, two, three or all four of the table sides simultaneously. The book has plenty of charts for all sorts of situations; the author seems to use six-sided dice throughout, but you can soon enhance them with other types.

Air and sea aspects of campaigning are covered albeit in a rather light way and the author describes one of his own campaigns and gives a very reasoned discussion on the advantages of fictional and fantasy campaigns over historical ones – though I suspect I'll never stray from

historical. He also explains why he chose the figure scale of 1:50, but leaves it up to the reader to do what suits him or her. There is lots more besides, as the contents page shows though some readers who have the aforementioned Featherstone and Asquith books will find some of the ground covered not particularly new to them.

Solo wargamers always seem to be looking for new ideas and ways of making their “opponent” more and more unpredictable – which is why we read *Lone Warrior*. This book helps to the extent that a short book can. For someone new to wargaming who can only play by doing so solo, this is a very good book; for an experienced wargamer who finds him/herself forced to play solo (or by choice), this will get them going and offer some inspiration; if you are a veteran solo player, you will already be familiar with many of the ideas in the book, but you’ll probably still get something out of this volume – it does a lot of the work for you. I consider myself in this last category and I have certainly enjoyed it, thanks to my wife buying it as my Christmas present.

Of course, you needn’t go just by my opinion. You can see more reviews on Amazon and if you type “solo wargame William Silvester” on YouTube, you can see a review by a pleasant-voiced American lady who does fantasy gaming, and there is a gentleman who shows you how to put a campaign together whilst using the book.

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