

WARGAME LIBRARY

With permission from Rod & Carol Langton upon their closing of Langton Miniatures, our library staff preserved the Langton Errata and author Q&A for the classic Naumachiae rules. Original website text is preserved below.

Naumachiae

Ancient Naval Wargame Rules

By Martin Johncock & Rob Langton

A powerful combination of historical detail and playability.

Covering the time span 3000BC to 600AD, the rules cater for vessels powered by oars, sails or a combination of both. they are based on extensive research including information on the performance of the reconstructed trireme *Olympias*. Intended for 1/1200 scale ship models, from small engagements to large fleet actions. Using Rod's 'Ability Chart' system - a proven success for keeping dice throwing to a minimum. Also introducing a specially designed ship base which facilitates the rapid calculation of results from contacts - collisions, ramming and oar raking. With summaries, step by step procedure, illustrations etc - making it easy to navigate, whether you're a new or experienced wargamer.

Naumachiae – Errata

Thanks for purchasing Naumachiae. There are a few typographical errors and points which need clarifying. Some of you will have had a copy of these when you purchased Naumachiae but check to see whether there have since been any updates.

The Reductions in Class Table (Pg 118 and Playsheet):

On the line for "5" reductions in class, we've tabbed a space too far. The letters J-N should all move back one.

Boarding Modifiers (Pg 110)

Under the list of modifiers for 'Opponent's Vessel' there are two errors:

Firstly,

Chemical/Biological weapons used in support should read 'minus 1'.

Secondly,

Please insert the following modifier: For each tower ... 'minus 2'.

Shipboard Weapons (Pg 76)

*Firing can take place at any time during the active player's Movement phase but there is only ever one round of firing per vessel per **part** of Turn.*

To clarify the above statement, please insert the word *part*. As you will read further on in the rules, there is an occasion for **defensive** firing and so the original statement, without amplification, appears conflicting.

Oar Rakes (Pg 88 and the Ability Chart)

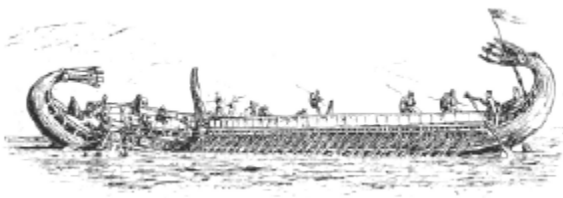
In the 3rd para on pg 88, the rule "all oar raking attempts that fail become collisions" is correct. However, it is assumed that the attacking galley has had sufficient movement to reach the intended target.

It must be clarified that a player who orders an oar rake but whose galley fails to accelerate or falls away from its target, must still head for the intended raking edge of his opponent's vessel even though it is obvious that it will fail to reach. In this scenario, obviously there can be no collision.

In the corresponding column of the Ability Chart, this same rule that failure means the 'raking vessel collides with target' should have repeated for all dice throws, not just 3 and 4. It was omitted due to space constraints but we should have made it a footnote - just so there was no ambiguity.

Naumachiae – Question & Answer

By Rod Langton



1Q: My understanding is that most battles would have been fought under oar. Did ships go into battle with masts set? Did ships ever sail into battle?

A: Early battles with triremes etc would almost always be fought without masts. The galleys would have been beached overnight to dry out their hulls and if battle was imminent, their masts and sails would be left ashore at the same time. However, some encounters must have taken place at sea where there would have been insufficient time to lower all the gear. The larger galleys of the later period probably retained their masts in battle and would have been less likely to beach overnight.

2Q: It seems from the Ability Chart that if a ship does well -or badly - in its ability roll, it will do well or badly in just about everything that happens during that Turn. We modified this in view of the small number of ships used, to roll for ability every time it was referred to. Of course, this resulted in a gazillion dice rolls!

A: It may seem unfair that in small actions, a low dice roll can be negative for all of the vessel's actions in that Turn. However, I feel this to be justified because:

(a) There is a degree of cumulativeness about bad luck; but, where there are good attributes, this can be overcome, eg with an Ability score of 6, although a poor throw, a 'good' crew will still be able to carry out a short task.

(b) The Ability Chart is designed to considerably cut down on the number of dice throws and so to a degree, there is some compromise. Having said that, I do take your points and offer as a suggestion (for small actions):

- Use a total of 4 dice and discard the lowest in every throw.
- Consider the allocation of game points to allow for better qualities of officers, crews, vessels and marines.

From the same person - later! *We played the rules as written, with only one Ability roll per ship. It really made no difference and sped the game immensely. Our original concerns about Ability rolls were, I guess, one of those cases where something looks as if it might be a problem in theory, but in practice was okay!*

We even learned a lesson during the game: if you ram somebody bigger than you, do not under any circumstances board them! Disengage and ram 'em again! And again! And again until you've loaded them with sufficient class reductions to make them safe to board.

3Q: When you announce your intentions for a ship, do you just verbally announce it for each ship, then roll the Ability dice. Or do you announce for one ship, then roll the Ability dice for it, complete its Turn then go on to the next?

A: If you're throwing for ships individually, you want to announce your intentions for all your vessels first before any dice throwing is done. You can then go on to throw for each ship and perform its actions as announced.

You can also of course do a single throw for a group of vessels. The same applies in that you need to announce the intentions for all the vessels before any dice are thrown. If you follow this rule, it will avoid arguments on the table, particularly in the case where two vessels are capable of performing the same action against an enemy ship. It would be all too easy otherwise to see how your first vessel gets on before deciding what the other vessel does!

4Q: If for example, Ship A has a cruise speed of 80, fast speed of 120, and the rest of the ships in its squadron are slower - say 105 at fast speed. Can Ship A move at 105 instead of the full 120 to keep on station, or is it forced to move the full distance?

A: Ship A is forced to move its full distance.

5Q: Ship A rams Ship B and shatters it. A was moving at 150 ram speed and it started the move 30 away from B. The rules on page 99 say A can complete its movement less 50% and can only collide with another vessel it contacts, not shoot or ram. Suppose there is Ship C, 40 beyond the shattered B, i.e. well within striking distance. C is however, friendly and the captain of A does not wish to collide with it. The word 'can' is used but this is under the section Involuntary Movement as a Result of a Ram. Is movement after the ram compulsory, or optional. If compulsory, may he turn to avoid?

A: To explain fully, consider two scenarios. In Scenario One, the rammed ship is damaged but not shattered. In Scenario Two, the rammed ship is shattered.

Scenario One - Even though contact ends a player's move, the involuntary swing of a rammed ship drags the ramming ship slightly off course because it is connected by its ram. This is the reason for the inclusion in the rules of 'involuntary movement'.

The involuntary movement/swing has nothing to do with a vessel's normal movement. Ship A **MUST** move the amount calculated in the rules to simulate the swing of the struck vessel. If another vessel, friendly or otherwise, is in the way of that involuntary movement, then a collision will occur.

Scenario Two - Where the rammed ship is shattered, it has no involuntary movement, thus it does not pull the ramming ship off course. The ramming ship now has the option of completing 50% of its move or remaining where it is. In summary therefore, where the rammed ship is damaged, there is involuntary movement. Where the rammed ship is shattered, then there is no involuntary movement.

6Q: Ship A collides with B and fires at it Ship B fires back defensively. It is then B's move, who decides to take the initiative and board. May he shoot prior to boarding? We know there is no firing once a boarding action is under way, but up until the point the boarding is attempted, there is the possibility as result of Morale that there may be no boarding.

A: You cannot shoot prior to boarding. Once you have declared you are going to board, then it is assumed that you will do so. It is only the exception that a player would need to take a Morale Test prior to boarding and these circumstances would be known to him. If your marines are under orders to board, they may not fire.

7Q: A ship is hit by incendiary weapons which start a small fire. The same ship is hit again by more incendiaries which start a small fire. Is that 2 small fires to be dealt with separately, or a generic small fire on board situation. We are confused because the Ability Chart says 'all fires extinguished' which the number of fires

irrelevant. However, under Alterations & Repairs, a small fire can be fought in conjunction with a short or medium task, suggesting only one fire can be dealt with at a time.

A: Yes, that is 2 small fires. The Ability Chart actually says 'all crews extinguish', not all fires extinguished. This refers to the crews quality. The Ability Chart takes into account the severity of the fires combined with the ability of the crews to extinguish them.

Now, bear in mind that there is a relationship between fire fighting and tasks. A small fire is the equivalent of a short task, whereas a major fire is equal to that of a long task. So that if you have a situation where there is a small fire and a major fire, you declare in your orders that you are 'fire fighting'. If your dice score gives you the ability to extinguish a major fire then obviously you take that option but you cannot take both - in the same way that you are limited by the number of tasks in a Turn.