



Vol.2 No. 12

December, 2003

*The newsletter of the North Texas Battle Group.*

The big news this month clearly is the loss of our main battle pond. A big effort is under way to secure new battle locations, and it's looking good on several fronts. A big "Thank you!" to all those who are working hard to find several potential new battle sites. This month's battle location will be determined at the regular meeting.

Speaking of the December meeting, both meeting and battle dates have been moved forward for December, to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays, respectively, to avoid conflict with the upcoming holidays.

3005 combat points is all that separates the axis and allied teams going into the final month of the year! All other segments are wrapped up, but even the sinking of a small ship could tip the balance in the most prestigious scoring category!



*A Big Gun R/C Warship Combat International Club*  
North Texas Battle Group  
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Garland, TX 75044-7140

***“Big Gun Radio-Controlled Warship Combat is one of the most important advances in guy thinking since the potato gun.”***

*- Dave Barry*

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## CO's Column

- John Mianowski, CO

My original plan for my last newsletter column as CO was to write something bland and formulaic. I planned to thank everybody for all the support and help that they've given me throughout my term, and ask that they give the same to my successor. This last month was supposed to be a time of winding down, tying up all the loose ends, and getting ready for another year of fun enjoying Big Gun R/C Warship Combat. Instead, we've been thrown a curve with the loss of our favorite battle pond. This creates a tremendous "loose end" that could threaten to unravel the whole club if we allow it.

Instead of allowing ourselves to sit back and reflect on a pretty fun and successful year, we've found ourselves in a position that requires a massive amount of effort just to stay in business. Make no mistake – this is a critical juncture for the club. How we conduct ourselves over the coming weeks will have a profound affect on the club and its future for the rest of its life.

It's quite natural to feel a sense of shock and helplessness when events that we can't control go against us. Imagine how people must have felt in 1941, when they first learned of the attack on Pearl Harbor. As the extent of the damage became known, many people must have been certain that we would be unable to recover from it. They could very well have been right, had the country not pulled together and gotten the job done. Everybody pitched in, worked hard, and the United States was able to turn what could have been a colossal disaster into the greatest military victory of all time. It somehow seems fitting that we should find ourselves in a position where we have to make a similar effort, on a much smaller scale.

Without adversity, there can be no triumph. It takes the horror of war to create the conditions where people can step forward and become heroes. Rather than letting it get us down, we need to use our current situation as a motivator, to push ourselves to overcome it. We will long remember how we handled this issue. How we deal with it will determine whether we remember

### **December, 2003 Events:**

12/7 1:00 PM - General Meeting  
Star Brand Ranch, Kaufman  
<http://www.starbrandranch.com>  
Highway 175 (Kaufman), exit at  
FM 2578 - STAY ON THE  
SERVICE ROAD. Turn right at  
Star Brand Drive.

Reports on the search for a new  
primary battle site

Club goals for 2004

12/14 Battle!  
Location to be determined at the  
12/7 meeting.  
10:00 Start setup  
11:00 Testing  
12:30 Captains' Meeting  
1:00 Start of Hostilities

this time as the end of Big Gun in North Texas,  
or as our finest hour.

\* \* \*

I'd like to encourage everybody to make a special effort to attend this month's regular meeting, on the 7<sup>th</sup>, at Star Brand Ranch. As has become our custom, we will use the December meeting to set goals for the club for the coming year. This is an important time, and an opportunity for everybody to have your wishes heard and issue "marching orders" to next year's club administration.

Besides the 2004 goals, we expect to hear several options for a battle site, not only for December but going forward as well. This is something that I'm sure nobody will want to miss. Finally, there will be a rule change proposal to vote on. This proposal has been brought up twice already, but we've been unable to vote due to lack of a quorum. We need everybody's participation to be able to settle the matter one way or the other.

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## November Battle Report

- *Jerry Ethridge, XO*

November's battle was again light on Allied warships having only the Nelson, so the French ship Richelieu had to change sides and become an Ally. The Allies also had the Cimarron and AK-63 transports. The Axis had only two fighting ships, the Scharnhorst and the Musashi.

The First sortie began with the Nelson first on the water to take control of the seas for the Allies. The Musashi quickly makes for sea and engages the Nelson. Shortly thereafter, the Scharnhorst makes it out to sea and the Nelson finds herself double teamed. Nelson wasn't in much trouble because the Musashi quickly heads back to port with some type of mechanical difficulty. The Scharnhorst and Nelson exchange a few volleys but none result in any serious damage. The Richelieu finally makes it out to help the Nelson, and they both steam towards the Scharnhorst. With the Scharnhorst the only Axis on the water, the Musashi quickly fixes whatever was wrong and goes out to help her.

Unfortunately, the Scharnhorst now seems to be having technical difficulties so she then heads to port leaving the Musashi to duel with the Allies. The battleships seem to fire on each other in passing and the engagement times are short and no real damage is delivered in the first half of the game. The Nelson did manage to fire enough to need more gas and so she heads back to port as the Scharnhorst comes back out. The Musashi now takes this opportunity to head back to port for more stores leaving the Richelieu and the Scharnhorst to square up in the middle of the pond.

The Scharnhorst and the Richelieu repeatedly fire on each other in short head on exchanges. The Musashi and the Nelson have loaded up and now join the battle. For the first time in the game, all battleships are in the battle and firing diligently. The Nelson seems to be getting low in the water and heads back to port. She is pumping steadily but weakly. She nearly makes it back but just at the port entrance, she rolls to the port side and slips under the waves. No one really thought she had taken that much damage, but a later inspection revealed nine holes below the

water line, and one on the waterline. This together with a weak bilge pump spelled her doom.

The Richelieu clear her fouled props during a TTO and heads back to port leaving the Axis with control of the seas. The Scharnhorst uses the break to replenish, and while she is gone, the Richelieu comes back out to challenge the Musashi who was currently controlling the seas. The Allies finally bring out a transport ship as AK-63 attempts a cargo run. The Musashi moves to intercept the transport and gets off a few shots but with no damage. The Richelieu moves herself between the transport and the Musashi and fends off the Musashi allowing the transport to make a successful cargo run. Next, the Cimarron starts a cargo run just as the Musashi discovers a problem with her guns. The Musashi retires to port which allows the Cimarron to successfully make her run. She immediately turns around to make another run with the Richelieu shadowing her as her escort. She makes that run and again turns around to make a third run. The Musashi comes back in the battle and heads for the Cimarron but the Richelieu intercepts the Musashi and successfully prevents her from getting close enough to the transport to cause any damage. Upon completing her third cargo run, the Cimarron heads out to sea to attempt another. The Musashi again heads for the Cimarron, and again the Richelieu goes to intercept but then finds herself with gun trouble. The Cimarron wisely turns around before getting halfway to the buoy as she finds herself defenseless against the enemy. She makes it back to port alive to try another day.

The Allies try one more time to score points as AK-63 attempts a cargo run. The Richelieu is out at sea with no working guns, and the Musashi is on the prow for transports. Musashi heads towards AK-63 and the Richelieu bravely keeps herself between the battleship and the transport. The Musashi takes the odd shot or two but is hampered by the Richelieu getting in the way. This allows the transport to score another cargo run despite the Allies not having any working

guns on the water. The sortie ends several minutes later with the Musashi being the only ship out to sea.

As the second sortie gets underway, no fighting ships are on the water so the Allies start off by making a cargo run with AK-63. As she rounds the buoy, the Nelson comes out to escort her back to port. The Musashi just gets out to sea as AK-63 nears port. The Musashi attempts to make a run on the transport but the Nelson successfully fends her off and allows AK-63 to make it to port. The Nelson and the Musashi slug away at each other in earnest. The Richelieu soon enters the battle and joins the Nelson to pound on the Musashi. The Musashi finds herself alone in this sortie because the Scharnhorst is unable to make

repairs to join the fight. In fact, the Scharnhorst is out for the rest of the day!

The Musashi and the Nelson soon head back to port to replenish and the Richelieu takes control of the seas. The Allies take this opportunity to send out AK-63 to make another cargo run, and the Nelson comes out as escort. The Allies also send out the Cimarron while they control the sea. With total sea control the transports easily make several cargo runs with the Nelson and the Richelieu as escorts. While the transports were making these runs, the Musashi's technical difficulties got worse and while in port she sank unceremoniously. And so ended the second battle with the Axis power conceding the sortie to the Allies.

## Battle Scoring

### Sortie #1, Axis

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Cargo Runs
Scharnhorst	235	0	16	1	1		0
Musashi	155	0	13	1	0		0

### Sortie #1, Allied

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Cargo Runs
Nelson	8950	0	7	1	9	SUNK	0
Richelieu	30	0	3	0	0		0
Cimarron	120	750	2	0	2		3
AK-63 (pink)	0	500	0	0	0		2

### Sortie #2, Axis

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Cargo Runs
Musashi	8400	0	9	2	6	SUNK	0

### Sortie #2, Allied

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Cargo Runs
Nelson	30	0	3	0	0		0
Richelieu	0	0	0	0	0		0
Cimarron	0	750	0	0	0		3
AK-63 (pink)	0	1250	0	0	0		5

## Team Totals

	<b>Combat</b>	<b>Cargo</b>	<b>Sea Control</b>
Axis Sortie #1	390	0	870
Allied Sortie #1	9100	1250	606
Axis Sortie #2	8400	0	0
Allied Sortie #2	30	2000	1139
Axis Total	8790	0	870
Allied Total	9130	3250	1745

## Year-To-Date Standings

	<b>Combat Points</b>	<b>Combat Sorties Won</b>	<b>Cargo Points</b>	<b>Cargo Sorties Won</b>	<b>Sea Control Points</b>	<b>Sea Control Sorties Won</b>
Axis	145360	14	4000	6	6858	14
Allied	142355	10	14500	14	9795	8

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## Proposed Rule Change

We were unable to vote on the following rule change proposal at the November meeting, due to lack of a quorum. We'll try again in December, to see if we can get a vote.

Change to: Rules of Construction, (no version), Adopted: 08 June, 1999

Change proposed by: Jeff Burns

Section to be changed:

VII. Ships and Other Craft

F. Motors and Speed Control

2. All vessels shall run no faster than specified speed or trial speed as defined in Conway's. A minimum speed of 24 knots for a warship is allowed. Speed of convoy ships shall be a minimum of 22 knots, not to exceed the ship's specified speed if over 22 knots. This speed shall be converted into scale speed per Table 5 of the Technical Appendix. If trial speed is not defined in Conway's the Technical Officers may approve running a given ship at a trial speed defined in at least 2 (two) other credible reference books provided that both Technical Officers agree.

Background: Given the overly precise way the rule is written and the lack of trials run in wartime and wartime secrecy involving some ships, we have no idea what the trials speeds were for several ships during the 1900-1946 period.

Specific wording of change: Replace paragraph VII.F.2 with the wording that follows:

All vessels shall run no faster than specified trial speed (or design speed where trials speed isn't specified) as defined in Conway's. A minimum speed of 24 knots for a warship is allowed. Speed of convoy ships shall be a minimum of 22 knots, not to exceed the ship's specified speed if over 22 knots. This speed shall be converted into scale speed per Table 5 of the Technical Appendix. If trial speed (or design speed if the former is lacking) is not defined in Conway's the Technical Officers may approve running a given ship at a trial speed (or design speed if trials is still found lacking) defined in at least 2 (two) other credible reference books provided that both Technical Officers agree.

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## Club Goals for 2003

At our December meeting in 2002, the club set some goals for ourselves, that we'd like to accomplish this year. Following is a recap of those goals, and how we've done.

**No battle-related injuries** This has been achieved, pending the outcome of our final battle of the year. Exactly what constitutes an injury isn't real clear – just about everybody has been hit by flying ball bearings, and stung, but no skin-breaking injuries have been reported.

**24 members by year's end** 5 new members have been added in 2003. We now have 22 members, so unless a couple more people step up and join this month, this goal will not be achieved. Another issue relating to raw membership numbers have surfaced, however, with the result being that there have been times when we've been unable to conduct club business due to the lack of a quorum. Since quorums are defined as a percentage of membership, "inflating" the membership rolls means that a larger number of active members are needed at meetings. This issue will need to be addressed sooner or later.

**18 captains with 1 or more operational ship by year's end.** 2 captains have launched their 1<sup>st</sup> operational ships in 2003, making a total of 11, well short of the goal. Doubling the number of active captains would have been a great achievement, but apparently not practical. It may not be reasonable to expect a first-year member to launch an armed ship. Every effort should be made to assist the 5 captains who joined in 2003 to each get an armed ship on the water in 2004.

**Hold 2 family BBQs, 1 on Memorial Day and the other TBD** This was accomplished, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> BBQ held on Labor Day. Despite the work involved, everybody seems to enjoy these and we should consider keeping this goal each year.

**Organize a contingent to visit a Midwest Battle Group battle** John Mianowski and Jeff Burns visited the MBG's June battle.

**Produce a promotional video** Wren Wynne has completed a promotional video suitable for continuous play in hobby shops, etc.

**Conduct 4 non-battle events at locations other than Huffhines Park (this includes static display & sailing events, visits to R/C boat races or fly-ins, regattas, etc.)** Only 1 non-battle event was conducted in 2003, a booth at a model show in Mesquite., 4, 1, +1, 3

**Conduct 1 battle at a location other than Huffhines Park** The loss of Huffhines Park after the November battle has forced us to attempt to achieve this goal, which otherwise would have not been done.

**Keep a running tally of scoring throughout the year** Running totals of year-to-date scoring have been kept throughout the year.

**Define some awards & their criteria, for presentation at year's end** Using the running totals as a basis, award criteria for individuals, ships, and teams has been established.

**Determine benchmarks for all cannon calibers so that a chronograph or other instrument may be used to verify cannon velocity limits** This has not been achieved and in all probability will not.

**Invite the local MWC (small-gunners) group to one of our family picnic events** An invitation to our Labor Day cookout was e-mailed to the main organizer of the MWC for the area, with no acknowledgement.

**Conduct 12 battles** 11 battles have been held so far, and if we are able to hold the December battle this goal will be achieved.

**Convene a rules committee, to review the current club rules for invalid references, unclear passages, inconsistencies, & other errors** The committee has been convened, but no output has been produced (no expectation of any was expressed in the goal).

**Conduct a depth survey on the pond at Huffhines Park** A copy of the Grading Plan, from the construction of the pond, was obtained from the City of Richardson

**Investigate the pros & cons of forming a non-profit corporation & present to the club for consideration** The CO will be making a presentation at the December meeting, completing this goal

Obviously, not all of our goals have been achieved. This should not be regarded as failure, however. Some of these goals were set without any real clue whether they were reasonable or not, figuring that we'd learn as we went – and we did! Also, achieving all of one's goals suggests that they were set to low in the first place.

Goals for 2004 will be set at the December general meeting. Be sure to be there, with your best ideas!