



Vol.3 No. 1

January, 2004

The newsletter of the North Texas Battle Group.

Happy New Year! To all our members and friends, the North Texas Battle Group wishes a happy and prosperous 2004!

Thanks to Wreno and Wes Wynne, for getting their family to allow us to use the Star Brand Ranch, both for our December meeting and the December battle. This looks like it's going to be the "home" for our club's battles for the foreseeable future, and is a fine battle site.

Congratulations to the victorious allied team, who squeaked out a win in the most prestigious Total Combat Points category for 2003! Amazingly, with over 160,000 points scored by both teams, it came down to a difference of only 1025 points! That's nothing – even a single sink of a single Liberty Ship scores 2700 - so the year-long battle was determined by less than a single sink!



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

CO's Column

- John Mianowski, 2003 CO

I'd like to extend my thanks to all the members of the club for their support and trust during my tenure as CO. I'm sure that everybody will continue to assist Jerry Ethridge as he takes over the con in 2004. It's been a lot of fun, and I feel like we've all accomplished a lot together, building this club up to a level where it's able to run under its own momentum. I wish everybody a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2004, filled with the joys of sinking and being sunk often!

To incoming CO Jerry Ethridge, I certainly wish all the best, and promise to be available when needed, but otherwise to stay out of our hair! My advice to you, Jerry, is to delegate everything that you possibly can to somebody else! Not only will this help keep you from becoming stressed, but it will also help train others to carry on after your term is over. Also,

January, 2004 Events:

1/11 General Meeting
1:00 PM
2806 Geneva Drive, Garland
2004 Club Elections
2003 Awards
Change-of-Command Ceremony

1/18 Battle!
Star Brand Ranch, Kaufman
10:00 AM Setup Starts
11:00 AM Trials & Certifications
12:30 PM Captains' Meeting
1:00 PM Battle Starts

please see if you can find a new name for this column. "CO's Column" just doesn't have any "punch" to it - I exhausted all of my creativity just naming the newsletter in the first place!

Club Sets Dues For 2004

At the December, 2003 meeting, the membership voted to start collecting dues and battle fees from club members, starting in 2004. One of the main reasons for this was to offset the cost of battle supplies. Up to this point, individual members have been supplying CO2 gas, ball bearing ammunition, etc. Where the club has wanted to make larger purchases, donations have been asked of the membership to raise the necessary money. By charging dues and fees, the club will be able to more efficiently and fairly pay for all of the shared expenses of producing monthly warship battles. Also, there have been times in the past year where club business could not be conducted because a quorum was not available at meetings. While we hope that all of our members would choose to be active, the club cannot function effectively if the lack of a quorum is going to consistently prevent us from doing business. The dues assessment will also be used to confirm those members who choose to remain members, through payment of their dues to the club. \$20.00 is not a large sum, compared to the cost to acquire and maintain any model ship,

and should not be a deterrent to activity. Current members who have not paid their club dues by 01-March will be dropped from the rolls.

Individual Dues:	\$20.00
Family Membership:	\$40.00

In addition to the club dues, members and guests who bring one or more armed warship to a battle will be charged a "Captain's Fee" of \$5.00. Members may pay \$50.00 by 01-March, covering their Captain's Fees for the entire year, receiving a \$10.00 discount of the cost for twelve battles. The prepaid/discounted Captain's Fees may not be prorated.

Construction Rule Change Passed

A change to the Rules of Construction dealing with ships' speed was passed at the December meeting. The updated rule may be found on the club web site in section VII Ships and Other Craft, F Motors and Speed Control, paragraph 2.

December, 2003 Battle Report

- *Jerry Ethridge, XO*

Although located on a new pond, December's battle was no less effective. On the first sortie, the Allies took the lead with the Nelson taking sea control. Next, the Cimarron came out and started making a convoy run. Their reign did not last long because the Richelieu was next on the water to challenge the Nelson. The Nelson and the Richelieu engaged, and each got in several good volleys as they pass one another. The Richelieu also scores some hits on the Cimarron and the Cimarron started pumping and called five minutes. At this point, the Dallas was unable to join the battle as smoke emanated from her hull when her gearbox jammed with debris. The Richelieu also looked to be in some sort of trouble and headed back to port to be hoisted ashore. Meanwhile, the Lutzow joined the battle and went after the convoy. The Nelson called five minutes but had to wait until the Richelieu cleared the hoist. The Richelieu however sinks while is in the hoist. Taking advantage of the situation, the Lutzow closed on the Nelson and engaged. They exchange several shots and after all the balsa clears the air, it is apparent that the Lutzow bit off a little more than she could chew. She was showing daylight through her bow and was missing a secondary gun. The Lutzow wisely called five minutes but had to wait for the Nelson to get hoisted. While waiting, since both are on five minutes, the two combatants circle not really wanting to engage their crippled ships. The Nelson makes it in and the Lutzow does not seem to be taking on water, so she got pulled from the water because her five minutes were up and is put right back in. She then headed for the Cimarron which is on her third cargo run. The Lutzow scored two hits on the Cimarron but these proved to be above the waterline. The Cimarron makes it back safely and the Nelson joins the battle and goes after the Lutzow. The Nelson however seems to be pumping most likely from previous battle damage. The Lutzow engages the Nelson one more time and again the Lutzow pays heavily. The Nelson however, starts getting low in the water and it is apparent that she will not make it. The Lutzow turns around and gets one more shot as the Nelson's deck goes awash and the Nelson sinks. Finally, the

Axis takes control of the seas. As the first battle comes to a close, the Axis have sea control but only after the Allies were able to score five cargo runs.

The second sortie begins with the Richelieu coming out for the Axis and takes sea control. Although the Cimarron is ready to go, she hesitates to start a cargo run with the Axis in control of the seas but finally starts a run with the Richelieu in pursuit. The Richelieu catches the Cimarron but her shots go above the Cimarron in the choppy waters. The Cimarron takes on some water from the chop and her pumps go on and off. The Nelson joins the battle and maneuvers herself in between the cargo ship and the Richelieu. The two battleships exchange fire, both taking heavy damage. The Richelieu's damage is mostly above the waterline, but the Nelson takes several on the waterline, and one below. The Nelson starts pumping and calls five minutes. Incredibly however, the Richelieu beats her to the punch and sinks close to shore. Meanwhile, the Cimarron was able to complete her cargo run but did not venture out again. The Lutzow joins the battle and engages the Nelson. Again, the Lutzow pays heavily and loses a smoke stack and another secondary gun. Even though the Nelson appears to be in trouble herself, she doesn't hesitate to give the Lutzow a pounding. The Nelson's previous injuries prove too much however and she sinks leaving the Lutzow in control of the seas.

The Axis did not maintain control for long because the Dallas finally made it out for the Allies. The Lutzow is pumping intermittently but never the less engages with the Dallas. The Lutzow slows down due to a fouled prop and goes in to shore to clear the foul. She then heads out again to exchange a few more rounds with the Dallas. The Lutzow takes on a heavy list to the starboard, which most likely moved the water away from her pump, because she stopped pumping. Her forward gun is fixed pointing to port, so the Lutzow's captain decides to turn the aft gun to port to shift some weight to the port side. In an apparent blunder, the Captain

accidentally fires the forward gun, which immediately rolls her to starboard due to the recoil resulting in an immediate sink. She sunk in shallow water, resting on her starboard side. The pump started working resulting in a small

sprout of water at the surface. In one desperate attempt to get back at the Dallas, the Lutzow fires her forward gun sending a shower of water several feet into the air. The Dallas takes control of the seas and that ends the second sortie.

Battle Scoring

Sortie #1

Axis

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Sink Points	Cargo Runs
Lutzow	80	0	8	0	0		0	0
Richelieu	9400	0	11	0	0	SUNK	9400	0

Allied

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Sink Points	Cargo Runs
Nelson	8950	0	13	5	1	SUNK	8950	0
Cimarron	40	1250	4	0	0		0	5

Sortie #2

Axis

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Sink Points	Cargo Runs
Lutzow	5700	0	12	0	1	SUNK	5700	0
Richelieu	9400	0	7	0	0	SUNK	9400	0

Allied

Ship	Combat Points	Cargo Points	Above	On	Below	Result	Sink Points	Cargo Runs
Nelson	8950	0	11	3	1	SUNK	8950	0
Cimarron	10	250	1	0	0		0	1
Dallas	205	0	8	3	1		0	0

Team Totals

	Axis	Allies
Sortie 1, Combat	8480	8990
Sortie 2, Combat	15100	9165
Total, Combat	24580	18155
Sortie 1, Cargo	0	1250
Sortie 2, Cargo	0	250
Total, Cargo	0	1500
Sortie 1, Sea Control	320	1675
Sortie 2, Sea Control	43	1554
Total, Sea Control	363	3229

Final 2003 Standings (segment winners in bold):

	Combat Points	Combat Sorties Won	Cargo Points	Cargo Sorties Won	Sea Control Points	Sea Control Sorties Won
Axis	169940.0	14	4000	6	7221	14
Allied	168915.0	12	16000	16	13024	10

2003 Club Awards

Awards have been defined for battle performance and service to the club, and will be awarded at the January 11 meeting. Some of the awards are based on empirical data obtained from battle scores, etc. and other awards will need to be voted on. Members may vote absentee by contacting the CO up to the time of the meeting, however we would prefer that all members be present to cheer on the winners! The following awards and their criteria will be voted by the membership at the January 11 meeting, with the results tallied on the spot.

Captain of the Year: Any veteran (defined as have participated in more than one campaign year) North Texas Battle Group member who best exemplifies the club's highest ideals through hard work, initiative, reliability, good sportsmanship, safety, leadership, and teamwork. All members may vote.

Rookie of the Year: Any North Texas Battle Group member who, having joined within the last 18 months from the end of the period (December 31), best exemplifies the club's core values through hard work, initiative, reliability, good sportsmanship, safety, leadership, and teamwork. All members may vote.

Allied MVP: Captain who contributed the most to the Allied cause through leadership, reliability, determination, strategy, and skill. Any captain who has sailed as an Allied vessel may cast a vote.

Axis MVP: Captain who contributed the most to the Axis cause through leadership, reliability, determination, strategy, and skill. Any captain who has sailed as an Axis vessel may cast a vote.

Allied Most Dreaded Enemy: The Allied captain who, through strategy, skill, gunnery, and force of will inflicted the most terror and damage on the Axis forces. Any captain who has sailed an Axis vessel may cast a vote.

Axis Most Dreaded Enemy: The Axis captain who, through strategy, skill, gunnery, and force of will inflicted the most terror and damage on the Allied forces. Any captain who has sailed an Allied vessel may cast a vote.

Club Goals Set For 2004

At the December, 2003 meeting, the club set some goals for ourselves to accomplish in 2004:

- *No battle-related injuries.* This is pretty clear and obvious, a goal retained from prior years.
- *13 active captains with 1 or more ships, by year's end.* This was judged to be a reasonable number, considering who is currently active and building, and how long it takes for a complete newcomer to get a ship ready.
- *Hold 2 family cookout events.* These have been enjoyed by all, and the club desires to continue.
- *Participate in 1 inter-club battle.* This may mean making a road trip, or hosting another club or clubs.
- *Arrange 1 weekend battle/family retreat.* The idea came up when the owner of a campground in Oklahoma invited us to hold a battle. It should be fun to get away for a weekend, and have some activities available in addition to the battle.

- *Conduct or attend 2 non-battle promotional events.* Finding time to get out and spread the word was tough last year, and 2 events seemed to be what the group considered reasonable.
- *Secure permission to use 3 battle sites.* This will allow us to stage battles in different parts of the area, possibly gaining exposure to people who might not otherwise make the drive. Also, it keeps our options open so that we won't get caught sometime without a battle site.
- *Implement a year-long campaign scoring system.* With the work of the Campaign Committee due to bear fruit soon, we'll need to develop a fair and convenient way to score campaigns on an ongoing basis.
- *Determine cannon benchmarks.* A goal held over from 2003, we want to get empirical velocity data on all gun calibers with the intent of retiring the "foam penetration test" as the preferred method of measuring cannon power.
- *Produce an informational packet for prospective pond owners.* Going hand-in-hand with the search for additional battle sites, we'd like to develop a professional-looking folder to give to pond owners.
- *Invite the area small gunners to one of our family cookouts.* This is a goodwill gesture on our part, to reach out to the small gun community. Hopefully, this will ultimately lead to a closer relationship and cooperation between the groups.
- *Conduct 12 days of battling.* Many of our members take pride in the fact that we can usually battle year-round. While this typically means one day each month, if weather or other factors prevent a battle, we can still catch up with a 2-day event.
- *Conduct 1 dedicated photo shoot day.* We'd like to dedicate one day to setting up some good photographs for our promotional materials. We don't want to sacrifice a battle day to do it, however, so a special day will be designated.
- *The Rules Committee should make its rule change recommendations by March.* Convened in 2003, the Rules Committee is being asked to make their recommendation to "clean up" our club rules by March, so that the club can vote on their proposals.
- *Produce a promotional poster for display in hobby shops, etc.* Brochures aren't quite visible enough, plus cost a lot of money to produce in numbers. We'll retain the brochures, but add a larger poster that can be more visible and have copies placed in hobby shops and other places.
- *Acquire an equipment trailer.* With the loss of Huffhines Park as a battle site, storage and transport of club equipment is becoming an issue.
- *Get a positive feature on local TV or newspaper.* There's no better way to promote our club and hobby than to get into the newspaper or on the local news as a feature.

Shipbuilding 201

Shipbuilding 201 will be offered as a follow-on to Shipbuilding 101. This installment will have the group building an armed warship using a fiberglass hull. A HMS Courageous hull has been purchased by the club, along with a pair of ¼" twin cannons for the main battery. The ship will be sold to a member at cost, with the proceeds being available to start another ship or support other club needs. John Beckerich has staked a claim to the completed ship, which also helps us get one more captain on the water!

HMS Courageous was one of a class of two light battlecruisers (sister ship HMS Glorious) laid down in 1915, that were completed as battlecruisers but converted to aircraft carriers. In battlecruiser trim, the ship gets 4 ¼" twin turrets and 32 kts of speed. UP to 14 torpedo tubes can be added, as well as the ability to lay up to 222 mines.

Mike Duffy will be hosting the build at his garage in Flower Mound. Starting date, build days, and other details have yet to be determined.