

Battlegames Contributor Guidelines 2010

Ethos of the magazine

It's about wargaming as a hobby. At first sight, that's a facile statement, because all wargaming magazines have that as their subject, but we'd like to focus especially on the practical table-top experience. Wargaming as it's done for real, warts and all. That doesn't mean poor quality painting and rubbish terrain, but it does mean a broader range of styles. Think of it as the standard we try to reach when we're doing our best for an important game, and then upwards, but not necessarily award-winning exhibition quality.

Commissioning articles

Traditional practice is to submit one or more articles to a magazine and then wait to see if and when they are published, by which time the contents may have gone stale and you've also been inhibited in offering them to other media. We like to do things differently, so expect to submit articles only after discussion with Henry, during which a clear idea will have emerged of what you're going to be doing, when it's due and when it will be published, which will save you wasted effort.

Target audience

English-speaking adult males. He's likely to have a strong interest in military history and own an impressive collection of books, magazines and DVDs, so assume that he has at least a basic knowledge of the historical period in question. Battlegames doesn't ignore the question of how we broaden the appeal of the hobby and sustain its future, and we warmly welcome women, children and beginners, but assume you're talking to an established wargamer with some years of experience. Articles specifically targeted at beginners will be signposted as such.

Battlegames is produced in the UK, and will inevitably have a British flavour, but caters for an international audience.

Subject material

Instead of writing a military history article and then tagging a paragraph about wargaming on the end, do it the other way round. Assume your audience already knows when and why the war kicked off. A few sentences to set the scene and then straight into the wargame, the scenario, the battle report, the figures, the rules etc. The more obscure the period or campaign, the more introductory background material is justified, but the sooner the article gets into how to wargame it, the better.

An example

2010 is the 200th anniversary of Busaco in the Peninsular War.

Your reader will be aware that the uniforms of 1810 differed from 1815. If he's not sure, he knows where to get the information. He may choose, having thought about his own and his mates' collections, to use anachronistic figures – that's his call.

The challenge for the Battlegames author is to design a mini-campaign or tabletop game which enables 1810 to be portayed and captures the feel, which gives the French a chance of winning, which allows Ney and Reynier a fair chance to assault the ridge without so harshly penalizing the British/Portuguese players that they get frustrated – in short, to design a successful wargaming experience.

Remuneration

£25 for every 1000 words published. UK contributors will preferably be paid direct to their bank account via BACS: a cheque is possible, but is more expensive for us. Overseas writers are normally paid via their PayPal account, which is the quickest method of payment; otherwise there are more laborious and expensive but nonetheless reliable methods of transferring funds.

Pictures will be paid for *pro rata* to the number of words they displace, rounded up to the nearest £1. This is a little unpredictable – when you submit a photograph or illustration you don't know what's going to be done with it, in terms of its eventual size. We are always fair on this.

Methods of submission

E-mail is preferred. CD-ROMs are also acceptable. We also like pigeons and will feed them for you.

Obviously, we'd like it typed, but we're not too fussy what software you use. Basic Microsoft Word documents are fine, but we can deal with a variety of programs and it's platform-independent – Windows or Mac can be handled. Contact Henry if you're not sure. Spelling will be checked and sorted at proofing stage, but we always appreciate writers who know their grammar and run a quick spell-check before submission.

Text-only articles are welcomed. Although there will be a significant amount of illustration in the magazine, we don't shy away from publishing plain prose if it's interesting or useful, and we can always add images from our own sources.

Please do not use clever or complex formatting in your submission. A simple indication of headers, sub-headers and photo captions will suffice and save us a great deal of time.

Photos – the highest resolution your digital camera can handle and in one of the popular formats (jpg/pdf/tiff etc). Ideally, the image should be at least 200dpi at the published size, so expect your images to be a minimum of about 200k up to as much as 3 or 4Mb (which may equate to the maximum resolution of your digital camera). Please do not compress your images any further, as this will impair their quality. If you're an expert photographer, you will be hailed as the god you are. If you're not so expert, please ensure your photos are in sharp focus and well lit: whilst Henry can pull off minor miracles, having a decent image to start with really helps!

Other graphics – we can accept eps, ai (Adobe Illustrator) and fhd (Macromedia Freehand) files. I'm afraid that raw CorelDraw files are not acceptable, so 'Save As' one of the other formats. Illustrations done in things like Microsoft Word are best avoided. Other formats already mentioned such as jpg, tiff and PDF, are also acceptable. Please don't submit graphics done in Microsoft Excel under any circumstances, unless it is literally a graph or table!

Illustrations – we can accept any form of traditional media for scanning, such as watercolour, acrylic etc. However, please ensure that the artwork is well packaged for protection and that you pay for additional postage insurance. Whilst we will make every effort to ensure its safety whilst in our keeping, we cannot take responsibility for any artwork submitted in this way. If you wish the artwork to be returned, please enclose sufficient postage for its return. This also applies to 'old-fashioned' photographs.

Indicate in the text where pictures are intended to be placed, but **keep the graphics as separate files, not embedded in the text.**

Photos, maps and other illustrations should enhance and inform the text – relevance is critical; so, for example, if you are describing a 15mm game, the accompanying photos should feature 15mm figures. And don't forget to include captions for the images, please!

Contact details for submissions

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