

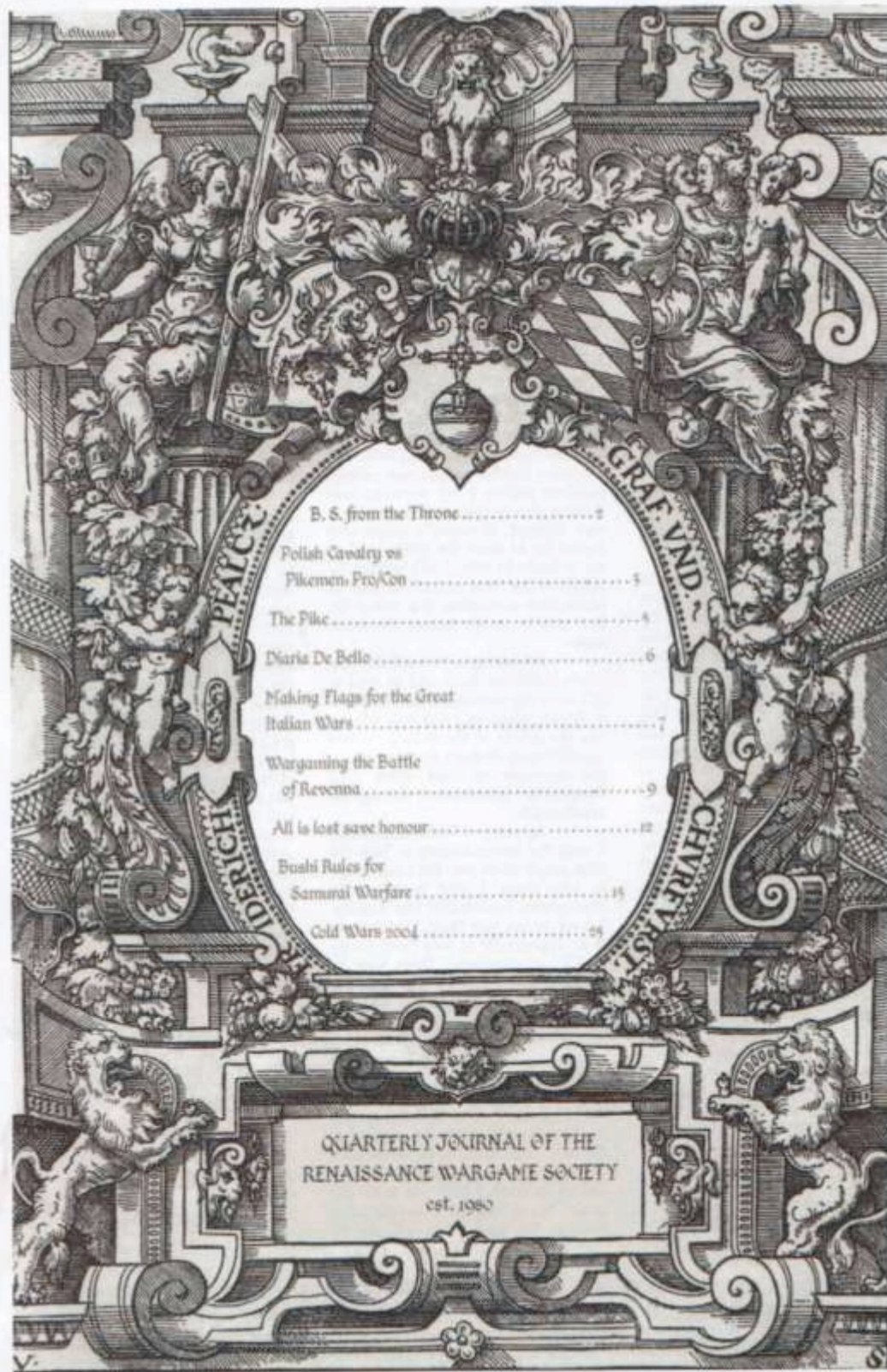
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Polish Cavalry Versus Pikemen: Con

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 The ability of the Polish hussaria to overrun pikemen is much debated and is to some extent greatly overstated. There is a tendency among Polish historians to ignore other tactical factors in play and concentrate solely on the fighting techniques and arms of the Polish cavalry. For example the defeat of the landsknechts at Lubieszow 1577 and Byczyna 1588 is often hailed as an example of how the Hussars could break western pike and shot formations, however in both battles the Hussars attacked the Landsknecht squares in the flank after other Polish cavalry and/or infantry had engaged them to the front. The crushing victory over the Swedes at Kirchohm is another battle claimed to show the ability of the Hussars to break pikes, however the the "pikemen" in the Swedish army were with a few exceptions untrained in the use of their arms since the pikes had just been issued and did not have any armour at all. The fact that the Swedish cavalry routed through and broke about 50% of the Swedish infantry prior to them being charged by the Polish cavalry probably played a larger part in their defeat than the length of the Polish lances. (Also no-one have yet been able to explain to how the Poles always knew how to bring lances that were longer than the enemy pikes.) Also if the Polish Hussars were so superior to western style pikes one

wonders why they avoided charging Swedish pikes like the plague during the war in Livonia and Prussia 1625-1629. In fact I've been unable to find single account describing Hussars and Swedish pikes fighting at all during those years. To be fair several small forces of Swedish pike and shot infantry got their heads handed to them during skirmishes in the 1621-1622 war in Livonia.

Gustav Adolf the Great, cavalry charges and commanded shot. To begin there is not a single shred of evidence that supports the theory that the cavalry of Gustav Adolf charged at the gallop, a big part of this myth seems to have been created by a bunch of Swedish General Staff historians writing the military history of the later Karl XII (Charles XII of the Great Nordic War fame). To cut a long story short they applied Carolean cavalry's charge at the gallop as a common tactic for all Swedish cavalry from the days of Gustav Adolf onward. Despite the fact that a Swedish historian pointed out that this was false in 1926 the myth and legend of the Gustavus galloping cavalry lives on in Swedish history writing today. (and boy do you get blasted for pointing out it's wrong...) All the primary evidence show that Gustav Adolf's cavalry used the same tactics as



the cuirassiers of his day, that is a charge at the trot and the use of pistols as primary weapon. What was "revolutionary" was that he used these tactics with cavalry that was no where near as well armoured and mounted as the "standard European" cuirassier, and won! Seen from a Swedish view point the change was even more amazing. From the the 1560's on Swedish cavalry had been inferior in ability and performance to the opposing Danish and Polish cavalry. Only against the Russians did the Swedes and Finns enjoy success. However with the Gustavian reforms the Swedish national and mercenary cavalry units were transformed in a few years time to a force which could stand up to the Polish cavalry, with fire support from commanded shot even the vaunted hussars could be defeated. Of course the Swedish cavalry was by no means invincible as the lost battle of Honigfelde fought in 1629 against a combined Polish-Imperial force or the pyrrhic "victory" Lützen shows.

Gustav Adolf was also not the first to use commanded shot, as Rich wrote this was done earlier by Henri IV of France, what Gustav Adolf brought to the tactic was a entirely new degree of training and cooperation among the forces involved. There is IMHO a fairly large difference between how Henri's enfants perdus were used prior to the



fortune of each one. They were armed with painted lances which had very long and sharp points of iron; these would penetrate even double breastplate. After them came about two thousand foot soldiers provided with the same arms, each keeping his own place in the line and exciting even sluggish minds by their drums and noise.

Next followed three companies of light-armed Latins equipped with lances adapted to skirmishing and with scorpions [?], these were thirteen hundred in number. Another line of Greek stratote



came next, twelve hundred in number; these were furnished with lance, swords, shields, leather corselets, and a few of them with breastplates, and they ran along everywhere on very swift horses and were decked according to custom with coverings of silk and gold. Their leader was Bernaardo Contarini. Another equestrian line of three hundred followed, lightly armed with hand-ballistas in the manner of the Italians and carrying also swords and daggers. Then came a third line consisting of two hundred men also lightly armed and carrying shields, and their leader was Alessio. [p 149-151]

Duke Lodovico accompanied these lines at appropriate intervals, and on his right he had the leader of the line, and he conducted the companies in the sight of his beloved wife who was seated in a carriage. Galeazzo Sanseverino, commander of the Milanese forces, followed these, wearing over his armor according to the French custom, a French striped cloak which was stitched with numerous bands of cloth of gold and silk, and when he was in sight of his wife Duke Lodovico reproached him for this imitation of French dress and ordered him for the future not to appear before him again in French costume. A standard bearer and youths with crested helmet on horses preceded him, and a company of three hundred cavalry followed him. But the standard attracted one's attention for a short space, for on it were painted figures contrary to the ancient practice of the Milanese leaders, namely a black Moor holding in his right hand an eagle with wings pinned back and strangling a serpent in his left. Draw what conclusion you will. Next after that line came Fracasso and his brother Antonio Maria Sanseverino, who with no less zeal were leading a squadron of three hundred

armed horsemen. These were followed by a company of German horsemen, five hundred of them, and they were no less conspicuous as regards arms, for they were more lightly armed than the Latins, their horses were not mailed, and they wore caps instead of helmets. [p 151]

After these there was one phalanx of German foot soldiers in square formation which attracted the eyes of all. It comprised six thousand

footmen, and its very virtuous leader was Georg Ebenstein, who stood out on his horse. In this line, according to the German custom, a host of drums was heard which deafened the ears, and these men advanced in order one just a little distance behind the other, the breasts alone clad in armor. The first ones carried on their shoulders longer lances with deadly points, those who followed lances which were more upright, and those next axes [halberds ?] and pikes. Behind these were the standard-bearers, at whose signal the whole line was turned as if it were a single ship and proceeded to the right or left, forward or back. After these followed the so-called 'pilularii' of light artillery and on these at left and right the masters of the scorpions and those equipped with hand-ballistas. Before Duchess Beatrice at one signal they suddenly changed their square formation to a wedge. A little later they divided themselves into wings, and finally formed a circle, one part in a light movement only, the second moving quickly as the first part turned around, and the last immobile, so that it seemed one body. On these followed squadrons of artillery, a mighty force, loaded on seventeen wagons, and when they fired their powder they hurled balls at Novara with a roar like thunder. After these came lighter artillery, called serpentines or commonly 'passavoanti', on two-wheeled chariots, and there were many other smaller than these which are called spinards, because of the resemblance, I suppose. [p 151-153]



Making Flags For The Great Italian Wars



One of the major problems gaming in the Italian War period is the lack of flag information. If I were to game in the English Civil War period, I would have abundant information concerning the flags used by both sides of this conflict. There are a number of sources for flags of the Thirty Year War period. However, when it comes to the combatants of the Great Italian Civil Wars, we have few resources. This was the problem I faced when I had finished my 28mm French army of the Great Italian Wars. I have 2

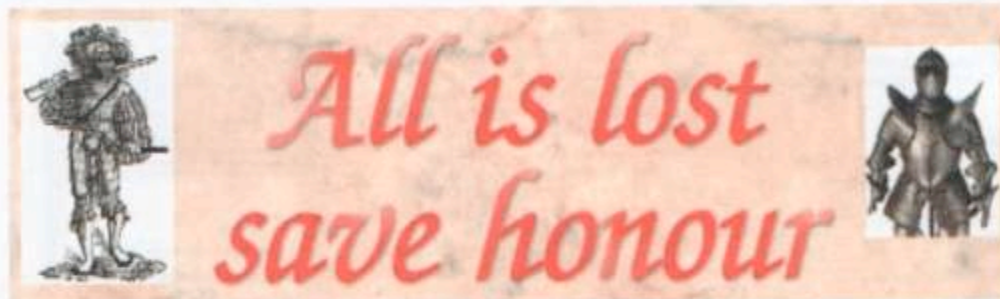
units of 48
landsknechts,
1 unit of 32
Picard
pikemen, 32
crossbowmen
from
Gascony, 32
landsknecht
arquebusiers,
and 32 two-
handed
swords men,
40 gendarmes



on barded horses and 40 heavy cavalry on non-barded horses. The cavalry is organized in 10-men units. Thus, I have 3 units of pike, 8 units of cavalry and a variety of units for the others. I needed flags to tie all the units together as belong to one army. I also needed flags to identify specific units. And, no where to turn for examples.

I knew that individual units of gendarmes were raised by the major noblemen of France (with permission of the crown, of course). This was to be the key for developing flags for my army. For my cavalry, I decided to have each unit carry the royal flag of 1 gold fleur de lies on a blue background. This way each cavalry unit could be identified as a French unit. Since the major noblemen of France were responsible for raising their own units, I decided to use their coat-of-arms as the flag design for these units. This way I would have one flag





Im a member of a Yahoo discussion group called REMPAS (Renaissance, Early Modern, Pike and Shot). This is an international grup which get on line to discuss military affairs and wargaming for the period of 1495-1720. A posting was made informing the group about a new boardgame based on the Italian Wars.

I went to their website, downloaded the information and art work. I then contacted them for permission to use this in this introduction. They were more than happy to give permission. They also told me that pre-ordering should begin with a couple of months.

Here then is the information OSG presents concerning their new boardgame. The bold type is part of their website information.

All is lost save Honour

"All is lost save Honour" is a game about the campaigns fought during the **Italian Wars (1494-1530)**, mainly between the **Hapsburgs** (the Empire) and the **Valois** (the French kingdom). The first volume is devoted to campaigns between Agnadello (1509) and Pavia (1525)

All began three years ago, after reading Taylor's "The Art of War in Italy 1494-1539", London, 1920.

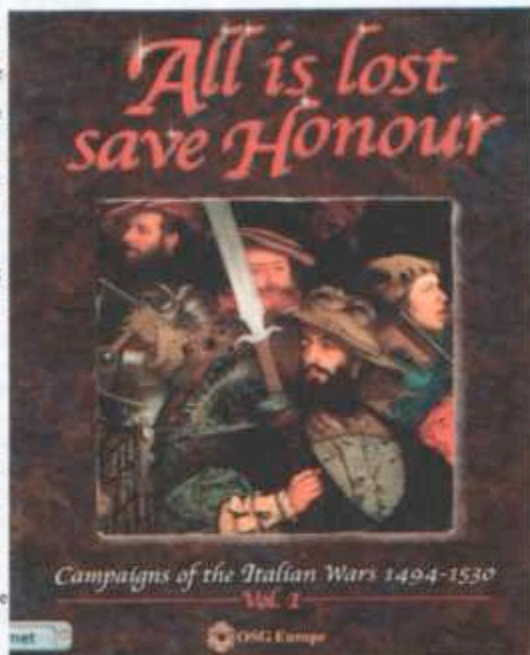
Soon that period looked extremely interesting to us and nearly neglected by the wargame community. Our intent was to generate any interest, among "aficionados" and historians, about that ancient era, when the **first applications of modern strategy in the art of war** took place.

and artillery (with some effect); sieges, mercenary troops, treachery, pillaging and all that "chrome" that may enlighten a wargame.

We began from Kevin Zucker's "the Campaigns of Napoleon", with the intent to create a derived, **XVIIth**

century version of the game system. Soon we departed from the original trace, and we had to change a lot. But the skeleton of the game is basically the same. Some concepts (the Force, for example) are remained just the same. Others (the Battle) are completely new. The intent was to preserve the original fluidity and amusement derived from the system, adapting it to a completely different era and idea of making war. As those campaigns were led to bring to "the battle", which was often decisive, we decided to bring in a detailed sequence of the main battle (said "Major Battle"). So in the game, there are **three kinds of battle: Major Battle, Skirmish and Siege** with the Major Battle involving different tactics played by each side.

We also changed the basic **Sequence of Play**, because I wanted more uncertainty about the manoeuvre and the final point were the two main armies would clash. Also the basic mechanism of Leaders' Activation changed, because we wanted to reproduce the difficulties of the Capitani (the Leaders) in finding the



This is the time of charges of cavalymen with the finest gliding armours; of the first use of fire arms





formation from the list below. Roll the Destiny Die to see if the chosen



formation may be used, requiring a Favorable result. Players secretly decide on their first and second choice of formations, then declare the attempts to one another.

Die Roll Modifiers:

- 1st Dan of Leadership = no die roll required
- 2nd Dan of Leadership = -3
- 3rd Dan of Leadership = -2

- +1 if the center of the formation is not to be the center of the table
- +x = the formation's difficulty level.

If the outcome of the test for the first choice is Favorable, the formation may be used. If not, test for the second formation. If that result is still not Favorable, the army will deploy in "Birds in Flight" (*Ganko*) centered on the table. Formations are not dependent on Yin or Yang army classification.

When the armies are about to deploy, simultaneously announce the adopted formations to the enemy.

Taisho assume Roles based on the army formation and their place in that formation.

Forces of Contingents with Aggressive Roles must attempt to move towards the enemy at half speed or faster and engage the enemy (within reasonable ability to move to do so). Mounted forces may opt to keep pace with foot troops of the

same Contingent. Forces may not maneuver (i.e. change direction, formation) merely to slow a mandatory advance.

Contingents with Passive Roles may move no faster than half speed towards the enemy unless already within 10" of the enemy. Passive movement distances limits do not effect formation or facing changes.

Contingents with Supporting Roles must have at least one Force within 10" of a Force in the Contingent it is to support.

All Contingents must retain their relative positions to other Contingents as defined by the army formation unless within 10" of the enemy.

"Strength" distribution in formations should be considered in terms of points, if in question.

Formations

Ganko - birds in flight - strength evenly distributed across the army's front in some depth (i.e. more than one rank of Forces or



Contingents). All Contingents in front have the same either Aggressive or Passive Roles. Contingents behind have Support Roles. This is the "default" formation if all others are disallowed and may be adopted automatically by any leader.

Hoshi - arrowhead - strongest and deepest in the center, with

flanks in echelon, with an emphasis on attacking the enemy center. All Contingents have Aggressive Roles. Difficulty Level = 0

Katana - sword - very strong on one flank or the other, refused opposite flank, attacking one enemy flank. Contingents on the attacking flank have Aggressive Roles, on the opposite, Passive. Difficulty Level = 0

Saku - keyhole - strength evenly divided on the flanks with the center deployed further back from the front line at least 1/2 the depth of the army to form a vacant space in



the front center (the keyhole). All Contingents have Passive Roles, but those behind the keyhole become Aggressive when the enemy comes within 10". Difficulty Level = 1

Kakuyoku - crane's wing - pinning force in center, strong wings bent back but intending to advance and attack both flanks. Contingents in the center and on the wings have Aggressive Roles. Contingents in the rear have Support Roles. Difficulty Level = 1

Koyaku - yoke - weak front with strong reserves across the army's width, but especially deep in the center. All Contingents have Passive roles. Difficulty Level = 0

Gyorin - fish scales - attacking (with reserves) in the center, both wings refused. Contingents in the center have Aggressive Roles; on the flanks, Support. Difficulty Level = 1



