

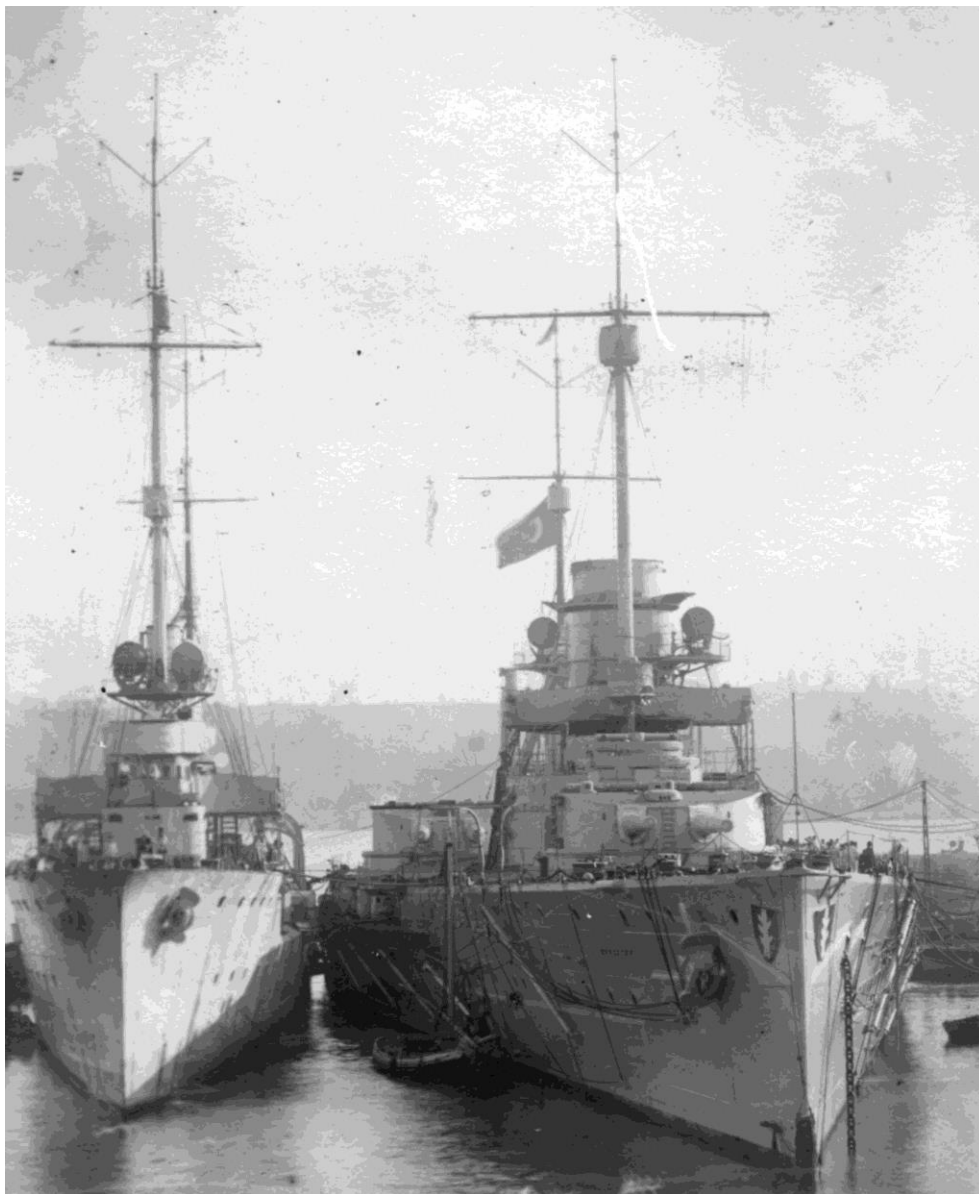


Colorado Military Historians

Newsletter

XLIX, No. 10

October 2023



Turkish and Midilli (left) and Sultan Selim (right).
These are the ex-German ships Breslau (left) and Goeben (right).

News and Views

Message from CMH Secretary

Eric Elder

Thanks to John Owen and Jim this month for their articles. John dives into the early history of the German battlecruiser Goeben in the Mediterranean. Jim shares his insight into basing 28mm miniatures.

October 1 we are having a club games event at Hobbytown in Westminster called Fall Games Day from 10am to 7pm. It looks like we are putting on four games so far. The list is available in this newsletter.



Larry has had to cancel his October monthly meeting Catalaunia Plains game. We should see the game at the December meeting.

Our Veterans Wars convention is coming up in November. Deborah Schouten has volunteered to be the coordinator. Please send her your game you want to run at the convention. Her email is debengllc@yahoo.com. Events are continually being added to our list on this page: <https://cmhweb.org/cmhconvention/>

Doug was recently contacted by a lady who was researching her grandfather from a picture of him in uniform. Picture was dated September 1899. It looks like he was in the Colorado militia but did not serve with the Colorado Volunteer Regiment over in the Philippines. His brother did. This might be a potential short article I will write up. This also might spark me to put together another 28mm Philippine-American War battle.

Decision Point in the Med

Article By CMH Member

John Owen



In any conflict of substantial duration, there generally occur decision points on which events turned. The earlier in the conflict, the greater potential of influencing the outcome. One such decision point occurred quite early in WWI. This was the futile attempt by the Royal Navy to remove the German battlecruiser SMS Goeben as a credible threat in the Mediterranean and Middle East.

Prewar, the German Navy maintained a presence in the Mediterranean, bolstered by at least one capital ship, rather than relinquish the theater completely to the British. There were other strong naval forces there, to be sure: France, Italy, and Austria-Hungary

all had considerable naval strength. Still, unlike the German Army, the Kaiser's navy always viewed Great Britain as the principal antagonist. From a young age, as Queen Victoria's grandson, the Kaiser had envied Great Britain's naval might and went so far as to directly challenge it by building up his own maritime power. The advent of dreadnought type capital ships temporarily negated much of the Royal Navy's numerical superiority, and Germany jumped in as a serious rival. This could only be seen as a direct threat to Britain, which, unlike Germany, was dependent on imports to survive and prosper. This had the unintended consequence of driving the British into a closer alliance with France, and then Russia.

As war clouds gathered in summer of 1914, the British Admiralty was well aware of the Goeben and her consort, light cruiser Breslau. Her whereabouts were tracked and ostensibly the British Mediterranean Fleet was poised to deal with her once hostilities were declared. Help was requested from the French, who demurred, preferring to deploy their forces to protect troop convoys from North Africa to France, rather than put paid to the menace of the Goeben. Italy, of course, remained neutral. Still, the Mediterranean Fleet vastly outnumbered the miniscule German presence.

As war was declared, the Admiralty's brain trust attempted to predict Goeben's possible course of action, and they were invariably wrong (like rolling dice and coming up snake eyes six consecutive times). Goeben started by bombarding French port facilities in North Africa, which froze the French into a protective posture. She then turned east, stopping in neutral Italy to re-coal. Mediterranean Fleet units were dispatched to corner her, but a critical exit was left poorly guarded, and Goeben escaped. In contrast to the British, the Germans pulled out all the stops to maintain their limited speed, working their crews to the limits (Goeben was experiencing some significant boiler trouble, and had since the previous year). The British battle cruisers continued much the usual routine (with scheduled tea breaks) despite their higher speed advantage, and thus Goeben was able to lose them. The Admiralty then concluded she would likely join the Austro-Hungarian fleet in the Adriatic and deployed accordingly. Wrong again. When the German squadron continued east, only a shadowing force was in Goeben's vicinity. Its commander was duly advised not to risk an engagement with "superior force".

The shadowing squadron had at its disposal two armored cruisers, a light cruiser, and 3 destroyers with a slight speed advantage. The Goeben was certainly a highly potent opponent, and British officers were very respectful of superior German gunnery. While the Germans possessed a considerable advantage in

gunnery and armor, the British did at least have numbers. Moreover, the Goeben had expended considerable ammunition in her North African foray and could expect no resupply; a prolonged engagement had to be avoided. The British battlecruisers further west - previously wrongfooted - were giving chase, but still too far away to engage unless the Goeben was further slowed.

Deciding that the battlecruiser was “superior force”, the shadowing squadron declined to engage, and the Goeben was allowed to proceed, ultimately to Constantinople, where she and Breslau technically became units of the Ottoman Navy (though still manned by their German crews). This outcome was hardly in accordance with the “Nelson tradition” of pitching into your opponent despite the odds. In the early 19th Century, Lord Horatio Nelson’s greatest victories were won when the British were generally outnumbered. In the years since the Napoleonic Wars, the Royal Navy had become timid. This brand of timidity was again displayed much closer to home, two years later, in the Battle of Jutland.

No one in the Admiralty seemed foresighted enough to consider that destruction of the Goeben eliminated the myriad of options available to her as she steamed east. The Admiralty knew of Goeben’s previous visit to Constantinople just a few months before hostilities broke out, and that she was well received by the Ottomans, but discounted this as a possible destination until it was too late to stop her. Could the shadowing squadron have sunk – or slowed the Goeben? It most probably would have incurred heavy losses, and this evidently influenced the decision not to engage. The shadowing squadron commander and his superior were later court martialed but exonerated.

It may not be an exaggeration to say that the course of World War I turned on the failure to deal with the Goeben. Up to that point, the Ottoman Empire, though closely associated (and eventually allied) with Germany, remained neutral. Political forces in the Empire were divided on whether to join the Central Powers. However, having eluded the Allied navies, and after a few months in Turkey and cruising the Black Sea, Admiral Souchon, in Goeben - flying the Ottoman flag - took it upon himself to bombard Russian ports, thereby initiating war with Russia, bringing the Empire in as an ally of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and closing the Mediterranean to Russian commerce.

Without the distraction of defending Egypt and protecting Suez from the Ottoman threat, as well as the Mediterranean Sea lanes, more Allied forces would be available for Europe and elsewhere. Russian wheat exports could be shipped via the Black Sea (where they typically moved pre-war) and would have provided sorely needed funds for Russia to continue the war, prop up the precarious Russian economy, and gain much needed materials by imports. This might well have increased Russia’s staying power on the Eastern Front and ameliorated economic conditions which later created fertile ground for the overthrow of the Czar and the subsequent Bolshevik Revolution.

Epilogue: After the Goeben fiasco, the British Admiralty swung radically in the other direction. In an effort to destroy Admiral von Spee’s Pacific squadron off the coast of Chile in November 1914, it peremptorily ordered the commander of a very inferior Royal Navy pickup squadron to engage the Germans regardless, despite the fact that heavy reinforcements were in transit, and that the Germans had virtually no chance to return to Germany given distance and lack of coaling facilities. At the Battle of Coronel the British squadron was all but annihilated, though von Spee’s squadron in turn was destroyed the following month by a superior Royal Navy force in the Battle of the Falklands.

Readers are again to Geoffrey Miller’s Straits trilogy, 1996, which describes in exhaustive detail events leading up to and subsequent escape of the Goeben and her consort.

September Unit of the Month

Sponsored by Hobbytown Westminster



Each month, at the monthly meeting, CMH members bring their latest painted figures and models to the meeting to display their latest efforts.

CMH Member	Scale	Manufacturer	Era	Unit
Eric Elder	1:3000	Navwar	WWII	USS Lexington, IJN Zuikaku
Doug Wildfong	25mm	Unknown	Nap	Spanish Militia
Tim Parker	28mm	3D Miniatures	Ancients	Prodomoi-Macedonian Lt Cav
Tim Parker	28mm	3D Miniatures	1400s	Aztec Warrior – Eagle
SCOTT HOLDER	25mm	Old Glory, etc	1400s	Hussite Art Wagons
Dave Manley	28mm	Footsore	FIW	Winter Rangers
Tom Dye	10mm	AIM	Samurai	Buildings
Tom Dye	10mm	AIM	WWI	Infantry & Armor
Tom Dye	10mm	Total Battle	Many	Building

Winner in **RED**

Veterans Wars 2023

Baker Community Center

November 11-12

9am to 6pm Saturday

9am to 5pm Sunday

Food available both days.

Coordinator: Deborah Schouten

Members who want to run a game, contact Deborah: debengllc@yahoo.com

Current game list as of end of September:

Nov 11

9am – 1pm

- Slot available
- Slot available
- Slot available
- Slot available
- Slot available

2pm – 6pm

- **Napoleonic War in Poland 1814**
 - The French and their Allies (Polish, Bavarians, and Confederation of the Rhine) fight a rear guard action against Russian and Prussian troops somewhere in Poland.
 - rules: Napoleon's Battle Second edition
 - scale: 15mm
 - players: 6
 - GM: Deborah Schouten
- **War of the Roses**
 - War of the Roses-ish brawl using 28mm figures. Rules will be taught and figures supplied for the game. Come, learn, bash a unit or two with your lucky dice and have a wonderful time.
 - rules: Never Mind The Billhooks
 - scale: 28mm
 - players: 4
 - GM: Tom Dye
- Slot available
- Slot available
- Slot available

Nov 12

9am – 11:30am

- **Swap and Sell Meet**
-

12pm – 1:00pm

- **Club meeting**
-

1:00pm – 5:00pm

- **A Tank Battle during the “First Battle of Alamein 7/1-27/1942”**
 - The British and their allies are fighting the German and Italian forces in the Desert.
 - rules: Armour and Infantry 1925 – 1950 by War Games Research Group
 - scale: 1/285
 - players: 6
 - GM: Deborah Schouten
- **ADLG Tournament – High Middle Ages: 1300-1500**
 - 200 points, bring your own army
 - rules: ADLG
 - scale: 15mm
 - players: 10
 - GM: Larry Irons
- Slot available
- Slot available
- Slot available

September

Game of the Month

Sponsored by Hobbytown Westminster



Each month CMH members host games at the monthly meeting. This award is for the effort put out by the host.

CMH Member	Scale	Rules	Description
Dave Manley	28mm	Sharp Practice	Kings Mountain 1780
Hugh Thompson	28mm	Blood & Plunder	Lost City of Gold, Part 1
John Brown	15mm	ADLG(F)	Malaxan vs Archasaurian Amazons
GREG CORNELL		Memoir '44	France 1940

Winner in RED



Historic Location of the Month

Karavia barge tunnel Rabaul, Papua New Guinea

The photo below shows one of five WWII Japanese Daihatsu landing barges in a tunnel near Rabaul. The tunnel was not close to water (~700 meters away) and the boats had to be dragged down a track and then winched down a cliff into the water. Seven barge tunnels were built in the war.



Colorado Military Historians Presents

Fall Games day Oct 1st 2023

at Hobbytown Westminster

9120 Wadsworth Pkwy Unit B,

Westminster, CO 80021

10 AM –7 PM

food and drinks allowed

Games available

What a Tanker by Bill Daniel/Greg Skelly

28mm World War II Tank Combat

All Day

Sword and the flame by Jeff Lambert

28mm Colonial Warfare

"Another Day On The Grim" Will take up to 6 players.

Art De La Guerre Ancient Warfare by Larry Irons

25mm historical armies battle

Midway Air Combat by John Warrior

1/144th scale Air combat between US Wildcats & Japanese Zeroes

Creating Realistic Bases for Miniatures

Article by CMH Member

Jim Rairdon

I have recently spent some time working on bases for my miniatures. This is all John Brown's fault! He asked me to play Dragon Rampant, a fantasy Osprey skirmish rule set for 28mm figures. Consequently, I started basing, and in some cases, rebasing my 28mm Medieval figures. As a result, I got excited about painting and basing again. Thanks John.

During this process, I have watched many YouTube videos, a few of them are from Hobby Cheating. While these mostly have to do with D&D and Games Workshop figures, I found them to be very helpful. Therefore, I thought that I would share some of what I learned during the process.

Choosing a Style

The first thing that I attempted to do was to develop a style for my bases. I created my test bases using some old plastic bases that I had that I would never use for miniatures, and just focused upon the techniques to make the bases look realistic without putting figures on them. This allowed me to evaluate many methods to develop a ground cover scheme that I liked.

First, terrain is not like a billiard table, so some height in the basing is very helpful. This is harder to accomplish with the small infantry bases, but much easier with the cavalry and special character bases. The next thing is that the wargaming terrain, and therefore, bases should not be like our lawns, a continuous stretch of grass. Another thought is that you do not want to make all the bases in your army the same. The idea is to have a style, but to vary the basing somewhat. I elected to go with a woodland theme for the army, but to make different units look slightly different. For infantry bases, I made up some small Sculpey clay "bumps" to add height to their bases.

This article is about basing 28mm figures on individual bases. Some of these techniques will not work for units of 4 to 12 15mm figures mounted on the base.

Attaching the Figures to the Base Before Painting

It is a personal choice whether to attach the figure to the base and add the basic ground material, and then priming everything together. I generally choose to paint the figures then either mount them on the base and paint the base, or paint the base then add the figures. This usually depends upon what kind of base is cast into the figure, and if I am putting them in "grass" or on top of rocks. As most wargaming figures have an extended base, instead of being figure like GW figures with no base attached, I painted the extended base of the miniature to match the ground color (dirt or rock) before attaching them to the base. Figures without attached extended bases, you can pin them to the base to make certain that they stay put.

Adding Height

There are a few ways to add height to the bases. One of the easiest is to use sheet cork. It comes in 3mm thick sheets and can be torn by hand to create uneven edges for more realistic ground effects. When you tear the cork, save the small scraps to use as future small rocks. You can use one to two levels to create "rocks," or you can cover it with basing material (see below) and make it raised ground. It just helps visually to have some different heights to the base, whether you put the figures on top of the height or

rock, or they are just beside the figure. Another material is Soil Cover by Mosser Lee. This is bark intended for house plant pots. It can make some very large “rocks.” I used this for special characters.

Ground Materials

There are many products that will give texture to your basing material. Vallajo and Green Stuff World make a textured paste in different colors that you can use. It is applied with an old brush. This will ruin your brush, so you do not want to use one of your good figure painting brushes. I have used Liquitex Professional Ceramic Stucco for basing figures for many years and I am comfortable with it. This is tinted brown using Liquitex Burnt Umber acrylic paint from a tube (no sense using expensive miniature paint for this purpose). You can add different paints to the stucco to change the ground effect. It can be thinned down with a small amount of water. I apply the stucco with a palette knife and put the figures into it. At this point in the past, I have sprinkled static grass into the stucco, and after blowing on it to stand it up, I called it good. This works with 15mm bases in an acceptable, if not good, fashion, but does not work as well with 28mm figures. To add texture, I use some Army Painter products that I have. You start with the larger Battlefield Rocks, then the Gamemaster Scenery Sand and finally the fine Brown Battleground. These are gently pushed down into the stucco with the pallet knife. When the stucco dries the texture and ground effects will be “glued” to the base. Once it dries it can be painted and then highlighted with a light sand or beige color to bring out the texture. Green Stuff World makes a whole line of basing pigments for different terrain types. I have mud, light earth, yellow ochre, light brown earth, beach sand and desert sand. This can be stippled onto the base in small patches, again using an old dead brush. Remember that nature is not symmetrical, it has very complex overlapping features. Make it random.

Ground Cover

Army Painter (<https://www.thearmypainter.com>), Green Stuff World (<https://www.greenstuffworld.com>) and Gamer’s Grass (<https://gamersgrass.com>) make whole ranges of tufts and flowers to be used for basing. This allows you to create various layers on the base. For example, you can use the 2mm light green tufts to represent moss or lichen. The 4 or 5mm tufts can be small plants, they also have shrubs. The flowers can add a very colorful effect to the bases. I generally put this down with white glue, but some people use thin super glue. The tufts should have a little dark brown or black wash at their base to add realism. If they are not the color you want you can paint them with normal paints. Dry brushing a light color to the tops can add realism. Just remember to mix them up and make them random on the base. I know I am repeating myself, but it is important. I will also use Green Stuff World leaf litter to add a finishing touch to the base. It is applied with white glue, and I find that once the glue dries, I can go over the top of the leaves with a diluted white glue to “lock” them to the base. Otherwise, you will have fall on your table all the time. I also have a punch to cut out to scale leaf shapes in various colors. If you buy one of these, be aware that they will not cut through cardstock. You need to buy colored paper, or stain coffee filters with appropriately colored inks.

Additional Terrain Effects

For water effects I use Green Stuff World’s 2185 Splash Gel Water Effect. It dries clear and you can apply it in several layers, and you do not have to build dams to keep it in place. Its drying time is 24 hours. If you want deeper water effects, you can use resin water, but you must build a dam because it is poured on as a liquid. I think that for miniature bases the Green Stuff Water Effect is just fine. Lichen can be used to make small fallen branches. I found some dried peppermint leaves at Hobby Lobby and they can make some natural looking ground clutter.

If you want to save some money, you can collect some of the ground effects for yourself. You can collect twigs, dry them in an oven set on low and break them up to be fallen branches. You can also go to a beach or stream and collect some sand of various sizes that can be used to add texture and “rocks” to your bases.

Tools

There are few tools needed for basing. I use a pallet knife to spread the ground basing material onto my bases. It is helpful to have some tweezers to help position individual terrain pieces, like tufts and flowers onto the base. You might want an old dead brush or two to help with placing pigment and stippling colors on the ground.

I hope that this was helpful, and that you have fun creating better bases.



2023 Conventions

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>
October		
13-14	Advance the Colors	Springfield, OH
November		
3-5	Rock-Con	Rockford, IL
3-5	Fall-In	Lancaster, PA
11-12	Veterans Wars	Colorado
December		
7-10	Midwest GameFest	online



Colorado Military Historians, Inc.

Colorado Military Historians (CMH) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote historical wargaming and the study of military history. Founded in 1965, CMH meets monthly on the second Sunday of the month, except in May when the meeting is deferred to the third Sunday. The meeting starts at noon at the Baker Recreation Center, 6751 Irving Street (just a few blocks west of Federal Blvd), Denver, Colorado. The club also hosts gaming at least one Friday night a month, called “Friday Night Fights” (FNF) at 7:00 p.m. Friday meetings will be held at a future determined location. See website for latest information.



CMH maintains ties with numerous local, regional, and national groups to help promote the hobby. CMH is governed by member-elected officers serving on the Board of Directors (executive board). Terms of office are one year, with elections held at the May meeting. New members are accepted after attending three CMH functions and a vote of the membership. Dues are \$60.00 per year, payable in January. Members wishing to receive a snail-mailed newsletter subscription must pay an additional fee of \$15.00 per year. Authors retain ownership of articles and graphics published. CMH reserves the right to edit or reject submissions to the newsletter.

One year Adult Membership: \$60.00
Half year Adult Membership: \$30.00
(For NEW members who join after June 30)
Family Membership: \$60.00 (one Adult and any number of offspring)
Student Membership: \$30.00 (16 to 22 years old)
Children: free (younger than 16 accompanied by member)

Club Links:

Web Site: <https://cmhweb.org/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cmhgamers/>
Groups.io Group: <https://groups.io/g/cmhweb>
Discord: <https://discord.gg/DAP2Gn>

CMH Newsletter

The CMH Newsletter is a monthly newsletter published by the Colorado Military Historians. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of all CMH members.

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