

The following text, contributed by David Hughes, is a rough example of play for the *Sea Lords* rules, using Volume I *Mistral*. It is not intended to be a 'quick-learn' essay. You will need to read the rules before you read the example. Hopefully, however, it will help answer any procedural questions you may have.

Sea Lords Example of Play

By David Hughes

Being the Trials and Tribulations of one Nicolas Haddock, Vice-admiral of the Blue and Commander of His Majesty's Fleet in the Mediterranean...

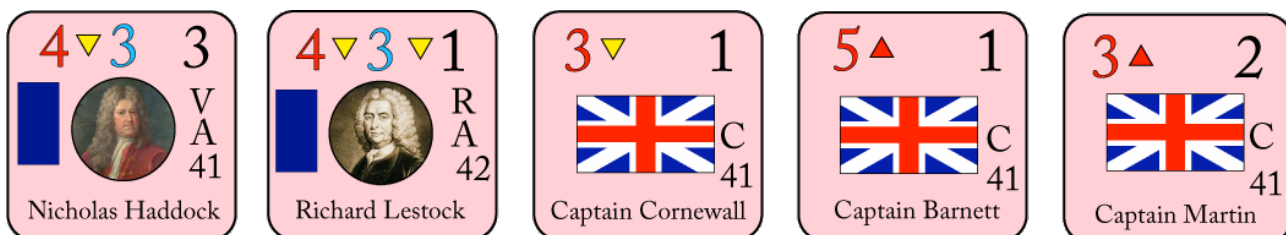
January 22nd, 1742 – the Great Cabin of HMS Namur, moored at Port Mahon, Strong winds bearing from the North and Rain. Haddock, sick and despairing of relief for home, peruses with obvious rancour a pile of despatches arrived from England on the Plymouth packet. His displeasure obvious to all who hear – “and am I not to know even if the French are at war, if the Spanish intend to war against me? Surely at the least those paymasters in London with their expensive spies could tell me the nature of my enemies; if they sortie and to where, and if they act together or alone? But no – these are instructions to go here and protect there, to cruise who knows where, And when I ask for ships – they cry that sailors are few and the merchants refuse the press – but still I am to be held accountable.” His spleen at last vented, the Vice-admiral reaches for the despatches, painfully aware of the choices and decisions that begin when he determines what they do contain...

This is not a blow-by-blow account of a scenario, but rather a description of the actions and events that could affect the Royal Navy player. Thus, for example, die-results and chit picks have been ‘massaged’ – that is chosen to best illustrate the workings of the game. The 1742 Scenario of the *Mistral* game – Western Med 1740-48 – was selected for simplicity. It will help if you have a copy of the map, but this is not essential.

Shaded or *italicised* entries are additional explanations of game mechanics.

Important. A map can be found on the back page.

Before play begin, the available junior Admirals and Commodores are placed in the box on the map labelled Officers' Mess. In this scenario the command pool consists of one Admiral (Lestock) and four Commodores (Captains Barnett, Byng, Cornwall and Martin). Looming in the background is Vice-Admiral Matthews – ready to step in should Haddock be forced to retire. The despondent Haddock himself is placed on the map at Port Mahon (on top of the Port's flag). Next all the ship points ('Sail') available **MUST** be allocated to Squadrons.



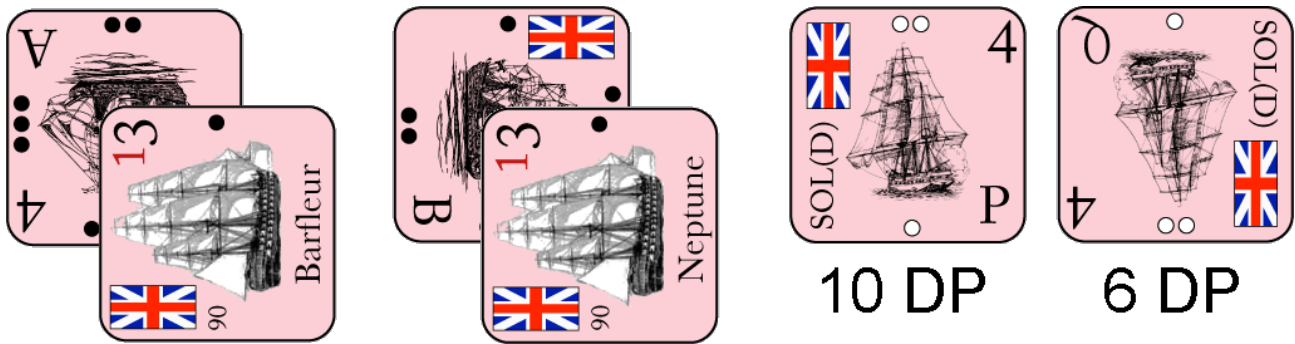
Most of the time, the Fleet and Command Admirals will be Posted to Flotillas. In cases where they are not, they should be stacked in the Officers' Mess box, with a marker denoting their status.

With regard to Sail, it is sensible to have the largest possible number of ships in a single Squadron, since in the discrete Combats of a Battle having less than the Enemy is a very bad idea. The standard Squadron type uses plain Ships of the Line (SOLs – representing the typical 60, 70 and a few 80 gun ships) and can have up to four Sail in a Squadron. However, *Mistral* also includes SOL(D) Squadrons. SOL(D) Sail represented the weaker 50-gun ships. They cannot be Subordinated to regular Squadrons, only to SOL(D) Squadrons, and the latter can only hold two Sail. Therefore, SOL(D) should only be committed to Battle if there is no alternative. (They can be used in a dual role (hence the 'D' in the title) acting as less adequate alternatives to frigates and sloops, all collectively known as Auxiliaries in the game).

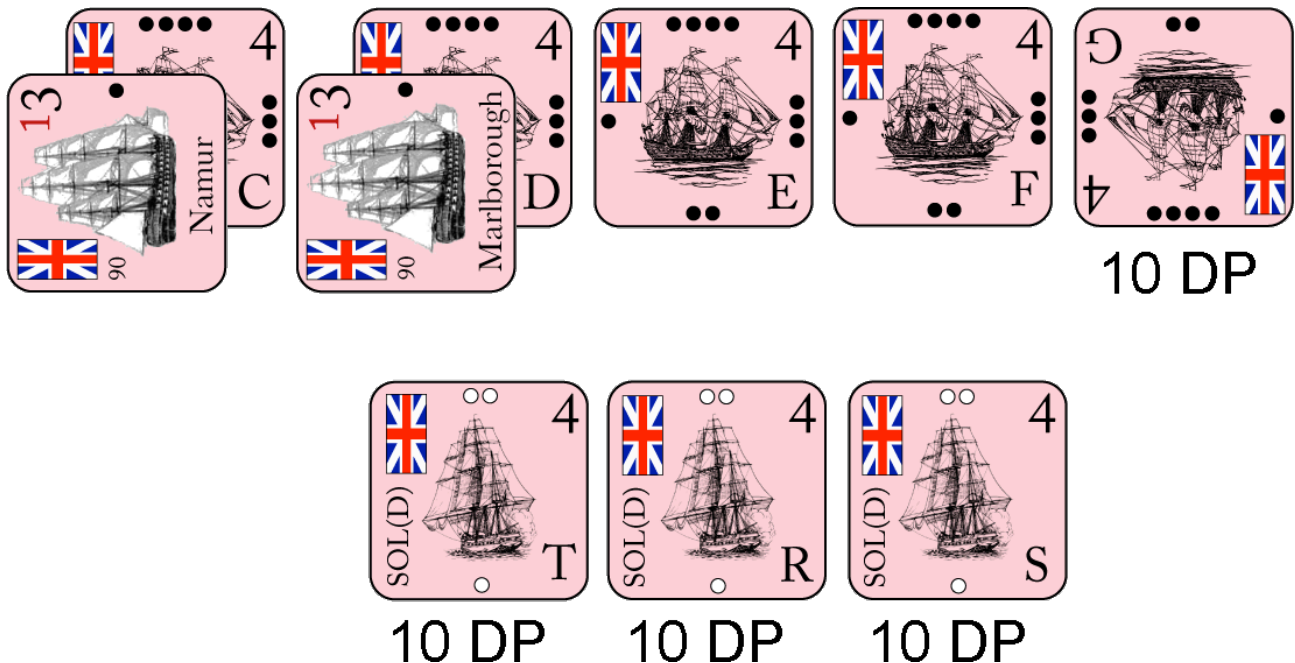
Finally we have the named Flagships. Each of these represents a powerful vessel (large three-deck or heavily gunned Bourbon two-deck ships). While they slow down a Flotilla (with a movement of three, not the usual four) they will be decisive in Battle. They **MUST** be 'associated' with a regular SOL Squadron. This simplest way to do this appears to be to stack the Flagship with such a Squadron, increasing the Sail strength of a 'full' Squadron from four to five. However, Flagships are considered separate Squadrons (mainly for the purpose of tracking Damage); therefore, the rules only stipulate that there be an 'association' – should the Flagship have to move independently of a Flotilla, it must be accompanied by one of the regular Squadrons from that Flotilla, and, similarly, in Combat, the Flagship cannot fight independently, but must be stacked with a regular Squadron. Sticklers for accuracy can 'semi-permanently' associate a Flagship with a particular Squadron by written notation.

The other concept to be mastered is that of Squadron Status. Put simply – while a Squadron is 'Fitting Out' it can be Repaired and does not take Damage, but cannot leave Port. From 'Fitting Out', Squadrons are moved to 'Ordinary' and then to 'active' or Ready, showing a steady increase in readiness; when Ready they must leave Port (though **ONLY** when given an Order – meaning that a Squadron or Flotilla without an Order cannot be made Ready voluntarily). At the same time, Squadrons In Ordinary or Ready are no longer able to Repair and now subject to Damage. Damage is especially serious in the winter, a time when sensible commanders repair their ships. Since most scenarios start with Damage already accrued it is important to reduce it as soon as possible.

At Gibraltar there are just three SOL. These would normally be formed into one Squadron, but there are also two Flagships and only one can be associated with a given Squadron. So we finish up with two Squadrons ('A' with two and 'B' with one sail) with the *Barfleur* with one and the *Neptune* with the other (*it is convenient to place the Flagship under the Squadron marker, so making the number of Sail present more obvious*). There are also three of the 50-gunners present. As only two can be in a Squadron, both P and Q Squadrons are Formed. Unfortunately there are also 16 Damage Points that must be allocated. The best approach is to assign all to the two SOL(D) Squadrons, since we will want the big ships in good condition when spring arrives, giving P (with two points) 10 DP and Q 6 DP (*the logic behind this seemingly irrational idea will be explained in a short while*).



The main body of the Fleet is at Port Mahon where the eighteen SOL are grouped into five Squadrons, with four points (C, D, E, F) and two (G). The two Flagships, the *Namur* and the *Marlborough*, are assigned to C and D (*remember, this is a loose affiliation*). There are also six SOL(D) grouped into three complete squadrons, R, S and T. In this case 40 DP's must be allocated, ten each to G, Q, R, S. All squadrons are Fitting Out and placed on the tracks of their Ports. The various Auxiliaries are all placed at Port Mahon.



TURN ONE: WINTER

For all practical purposes nothing will happen in a scenario starting in January (no Orders yet and why sail in winter) although it might be different in a campaign game. So we ignore the wind and movement stages and proceed to the:

Administrative Phase (*and this being the first it will be covered in detail*)

In Mistral the actions of a Fleet commander are largely governed by external *Events* such as declarations of war, and by *Orders* sent by a headquarters. These are shown by Event markers which are placed on the political and military charts and may advance depending on die-rolls, and by Order Chits that are pooled and can be drawn in each Administrative Phase. Successfully completed Orders earn Prestige points. Events govern both the resources one is given and the actions we and the Enemy must take into account.

At the start of this scenario two *Event* markers must be placed, one in the top left corner of the political chart (War Start) and the other in the bottom right (Corsican Insurgency #1). The following order chits are then sorted and placed in cup (note that the Bourbon also has a cup but with different orders):

- Show of Force; Corsica (a whole bunch more will go in when Austria joins the war)
- Cruise – all seven (Spanish, Riviera, African, Italian, Corsica and Sardinia, Adriatic, Sicily)
- Interdict – Gibraltar, Bonifacio, Messina, Sicilian, Otranto, Cartagena, Barcelona, Cadiz
- Escort

The relationship between Formations and Orders is a bit tricky. A Flotilla Formation* may always be made Ready (if so desired), leave Port and gallivant about the map, without an Order. It will not, however, earn kudos for the player unless Enemy Sail are Sunk. You can, with a successful Strategy Check, Issue an Order to a Flotilla already at sea. Ideally, because of that SC, the Flotilla should be Issued an Order while In Ordinary (which will force it to make Ready as soon as possible). However, if you want to simply roam the seas in search of prey, you will have to forego tallying successful Orders because there are no ‘search and destroy’ OCs. With individual Squadrons it is different. A Squadron by itself is not a Formation unless Issued a special RVO (Rendezvous Order). This allows it to rebase, or join a concentration of ships, even to engage Enemy forces in a limited manner. RVO chits are limited in number, restricting the number of Squadrons that may act as Formations – and they cannot be Issued to Flotillas – but at least they are not pooled with the other OCs, being available for use at the owing player’s discretion.

**Flotillas are Formations commanded by a Leader that are capable of initiating Battle. In contrast, an Independent Squadron, while capable of fighting defensively, is not commanded by a Leader and cannot seek out Battle. Again, a Convoy, even though it may include a Squadron of warships, is a Leader-less ‘non-combat formation’ that can only defend itself.*

Event: The Bourbon player checks for Events (either player may do so, but he has greater interest). He consults the Political Events Flow Chart and the scenario instructions. Per the instructions, and the date, and the lack of any prerequisites, only the Events ‘Spain and Austria Go To War’ and ‘Corsican Insurgency’ are possible. The first occurs, since it only needs a die roll of 8 or less for success. The ‘Spain and Austria Go To War’ Event chit is placed in that box on the flow chart. Referring to the Event Booklet, we learn that the Spanish get the Naples Bourbon Contingent, which includes a small but useful Contingent of Sail. Plus, a whole chunk of additional Orders are added to the cups. For the British these are:

- Show of Force (Naples, Venice, France, Piedmont-Sardinia)
- Support Army (Appenines, Po Valley)
- Interdict (Naples)

However the next roll, for Corsica, fails (2 or less needed).

And that will be it until Spring. Unless otherwise noted, Events are only checked for on a Quarterly basis.

Orders: The British player MAY (*there is never the necessity to pick Orders but never doing so also means no success!*) pull two orders from his cup and then return one and hold the other (‘in Hand’). Note that the Bourbon player is more fortunate, being able to keep one from three. The Orders turn out to be ‘Interdiction - Blockade Barcelona’ and ‘Cruise - Corsica and Sardinia’ This is a no-brainer as the Cruise order requires a Formation, a group of ships commanded by an Admiral or Commodore and there is no way our precious ships of the line are going to sea in the middle of winter! But an Interdiction can be carried out by a frigate or two, expendable if necessary, so it is retained. These Orders In Hand can be retained until the end of the Year, but a quick check of the Bourbon order of battle shows that Barcelona is weak, so this is a good time to try to get a Prestige point. The ‘Blockade Barcelona’ is placed under one of the two Fleet Auxiliaries at Port Mahon (*Orders can only be placed (Issued) in this stage and only with a Formation or an Auxiliary in Port. Note that they CANNOT be placed under a Squadron – except for RVOs).*

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: It is not a good idea to get these in winter unless absolutely necessary since the new Sail that arrives add two Damage Points to the Squadrons they join. But one action is essential, the announcement that a Victualling Convoy is forming in England. As will be seen it is vital in making up for the inadequacy of the Royal Navy dockyards in the Mediterranean. It will collect two Repair Points per Turn, starting now. And in addition:

As mentioned before 50-gun ships tend to be a burden in battle, though sometimes necessary just to make up numbers. But they do have another use – they can be converted into ‘50 Auxiliaries’, not as effective as frigates but with an unlimited range. Should one have 50-gun Squadrons with lots of Damage Points that are highly unlikely to be removed in the short term (as with Haddock’s fleet) this is a useful alternative. Each Auxiliary formed requires two SOL(D) Sail so in this case we simply remove two 50-gun Squadrons (P from Gibraltar and T from Mahon, both with 10 DP) and receive two matching Auxiliaries. They are placed in the Available Box but can be assigned at once - in this case back to their original Ports. This process can be reversed but when doing so each Sail adds 4 DP to its new Squadron, therefore 8 DP if grouped into one. In a Fleet like Haddock’s – one full of better ships of the line – this process makes sense, but it can be a costly one when a Fleet has fewer Squadrons in Battle.

One caveat. Removing Sail from a Squadron (or making any similar force alteration) normally requires a Leadership Check. The special rules for *Mistral* make no mention of this, and in fact it is NOT required in this case. However, the players may wish to add a house rule forcing the usual LC before a PAIR of SOL(D) Sail can be converted to an Auxiliary.

Attrition: None – this does not apply to Fitting Out Squadrons, or to Auxiliaries.

Blockade Auxiliaries: None yet – it will matter next Turn to the frigate at Cartagena.

Squadron Status: There is no change as Admiral Haddock does not intend to risk his ships in winter.

Repairs: The Spanish can roll once per Turn in each Port, but the Royal Navy only once per quarter – hence the call for victuallers from England. At Gibraltar a roll of 6 means two DP taken off Q (now reduced to four), at Mahon a roll of 2 means three DP taken off SOL Squadron G, taking it down to seven DPs.

Fleet Admiral Relief: The magic moment for which Admiral Haddock has been praying has finally arrived, when orders would relieve him of command and return him to the luxury of England. Of course there is no hope – in reality because the Admiralty has not yet managed to find a senior officer willing to serve – in the game because it will only happen if the Fleet Admiral mismanaged things the previous year.

TURN TWO

Wind Table (by mutual agreement this step can be missed if nothing is happening in the coming turn).

In this case, although many Seasonal Winds can be active in winter, there are none that will affect the western part of the map.

Gales are to be avoided at all costs. A study of the Attrition Table shows that Squadrons will normally get one Damage Point per Turn if at sea. But if unfortunate enough to be caught in a Gale it could receive that many for every Space entered – in the worst case as many as twelve DPs per *Impulse*. So if at sea move *at once* out of the path of the Seasonal Wind at Gale Force, and if in Port do not leave until it ends. A careful study of the applicable Winds in the Wind Table (5.3) will show which wind-paths should be avoided in a particular Season.

And while they do not inflict damage on Auxiliaries they can certainly force them back to Port, as will be seen.

Impulse One: The Fleet Auxiliary is passed along the sea-lanes from Port Mahon to outside the Port of Barcelona, counting MPs as if it were moving, but ignoring any requirement to Catch the Wind (*for this example we assume that it has the range – had it not, the newly created 50 Auxiliary with its unlimited range will do*). To achieve a Prestige point it will have to stay there for eight consecutive Impulses.

Impulse Two: The Bourbon player can remove the ‘Blockade Barcelona’ by simply moving a Formation (*remember this means at least one squadron of SOL*) from Cartagena into the hex – but is highly unlikely to risk this in winter. We also know that the only Auxiliary he has in Barcelona is a Galley, which is incapable of Screening a frigate (*Screening would be done immediately in most cases, but can be attempted at any time*).

Impulse Three and Four: No action

Administrative Phase:

If we were playing the Spanish we would in this phase start preparing our Squadrons. But they have the advantage of getting Repairs every Turn, we only each Quarter. So a calculated risk is taken to prepare the ships at Gibraltar and Port Mahon for sea, assuming that we will be able to dock and Repair them later in the Year. The Gibraltar ships will meet the incoming Victualling Convoy for the short trip to safety and later again it will be joined by the main fleet from Port Mahon to convoy past the Enemy main fleet. It means the Spanish could sail without serious opposition for a Turn, but that is the price we are paying for inadequate supplies at Port Mahon and Gibraltar (*although Port Mahon had elaborate docks its countryside could not produce naval supplies. These were obtained from Northern Europe and then convoyed to the Mediterranean*).

Events: *Corsican Insurgency* roll is no effect (two or less required).

The only action that takes place is:

Blockade Auxiliary: The frigates Blockading Barcelona determine whether they are forced off station. This is done by rolling against the Attrition number of the Port – in this case ‘1’. A roll of four means they remain safe.

Reinforcements: The Victualling Convoy now has 4 Repair Points

TURN THREE

Wind Table: The Spanish player announces that all winds in the Western Mediterranean must be rolled for. These include the the Mistral – in effect on a four or less – and the Marin – with a three. The Mistral roll is high but that for the Marin is a two. Horror! – checking the Wind Table (*both on the map and among the tables*) it shows that the Marin is in effect on a roll of three or less, but at Gale Force when the result is two.

Impulse One: The Spanish are moving! A counter leaves Cadiz (using the white chevron going east) to Gibraltar. Automatically Spotted as it passes through the Straits, we learn it contains four squadrons, of ten Sail and four Auxiliaries. (*A spotted force is not required to reveal the type of sail present, so mixing the number and strength of the two types of SOL Squadron allows one to deceive!*). Since all our ships are being Repaired we cannot intercept and therefore there is no point in sending an Auxiliary to Shadow (*it is Spotted again at Gibraltar*). In any case, it is obvious

the entire force is going to Cartagena. They finish the Impulse at the large Space east of Gibraltar (a cost of one MP to Gibraltar and then two MP going *against* the wind.

Technically, the move is conducted one MP at a time, AND the Bourbon player is required to indicate each move with Directional Markers. But, since there is no opposition this would simply be a waste of time, so the counters are moved in the 'traditional' way.

At some point in the Impulse we have to see whether the frigate can stay on station in a Gale. The Attrition Chart (11.2) shows that it will fail on a die-roll of 5-9: Passed with a two.

Impulse Two: The Spanish have fooled us. In this Impulse they by-pass Cartagena and stop just to its east (in Space #2). It is now obvious that they are heading for Barcelona and there is nothing we can do to stop them as the ships in Port Mahon are still under Repair. To make matters worse the Attrition roll is seven – Remove. This causes two actions, both unsatisfactory. First the Fleet Auxiliary is taken and placed in the Recovery Box on the map. Worse, the Order was not completed – a numerical chit (value '1') is placed in the British Failed Orders box on the map.

Impulses Three and Four: The Spanish continue to slowly sail north-east against the white chevrons and then, with disturbing cunning, follow the Marin Wind that gave us trouble into Barcelona. Without this they might have still been at sea in the next Turn. This voyage certainly cost them serious DPs – up to six if their die rolls were bad – and they will be immobile while recovering. However they are now both very close to the Bourbon Fleets in Toulon and would have driven off our Blockade had the Gale not done it for them.

Administrative Phase:

Events: *Corsican Insurgency* roll is no effect again.

The only action that takes place is:

Recover Auxiliary: At this stage a die is rolled for each counter in the Recovery Box. A roll of four recovers the Fleet Auxiliary (the Recovery Table shows a useful mod that helps the recovery of British ones). It is moved to the Available Box on the map. In a later Turn it can be assigned to Port Mahon or Gibraltar or to a Formation.

Reinforcements: The Victualling Convoy now has 6 Repair Points

TURN FOUR:

Both players decide no action: So straight to the Administrative Phase

Administrative Phase:

Reinforcements: The Victualling Convoy now has 8 Repair Points

Return Squadrons from Fitting Out: The SOL squadrons with their flagships at Gibraltar (A and B) have the fitting out markers removed. They are now 'in Ordinary'. The same is done with the all four intact SOL squadrons (C, D, E, F) at Mahon.

TURN FIVE: SPRING

Wind Table: (there is a different set now, but still with considerable risk of Gales). The Gregales are active.

Impulse One: A Spanish Flotilla leaves Barcelona; we task a Fleet Auxiliary from Port Mahon to Search. The Spanish Screen is also a Fleet Auxiliary – it is therefore successful and both Auxiliaries are returned to their Recovery Boxes on the map. *It is possible to Search in every Space the Spanish enter – four already, but in this case there is little point in using up more of our precious Auxiliaries since the Formation will be Spotted anyway when passing Gibraltar.*

Impulse Two: The Spanish continue south, moving quickly with the prevailing wind and enter Cartagena.

Impulse Three: Instead of staying, a Spanish Flotilla (the same one?) leaves Cartagena and passes Gibraltar. Spotted – three squadrons, six sail and one auxiliary – and enters Cadiz.

Impulse Four: No movement, but the smug Bourbon player shows an Order Chit and adds one to his Completed Orders box on the map. The order was 'Cruise – Spanish Coast' which required a round trip between Barcelona and Cadiz. Their Fulfilled Orders box moves to one. Currently, the Bourbons will be earning one Prestige point at the end of scenario. One more Fulfilled Bourbon Order and the British will also lose a Prestige point, giving a two-point spread in favour of the Bourbon player.

Administrative Phase:

Events: *Corsican Insurgency* roll is no effect; *Trouble in the West Indies* is now possible (the Event Instruction Book and Flow Chart show that it applies in Spring and Summer only) but it also fails. Players also now start to use the Military Campaign Flow Chart.

The MC Flow Chart is used to track the progress of the land war, the all-important campaigns that will determine the nature and purpose of the naval war in the Mediterranean. The process is simple: The Event Chart showed that two campaigns (in the Po Valley and in the Apennines) are initiated one quarter after Austria and Spain went to war – which

it now. Each must meet conditions to begin. By comparing the pre-requisites on the Military Chart and the information shown at the top of the British 1742 Scenario sheet it can be seen that the Apennines Campaign can be active (as the Apennines are Bourbon and war has started) on a die roll of five or less. The Po Valley MC is active without a die roll (the Po Valley is Austrian, war has started). The Bourbon player rolls for the Apennines MC and it activates as well.

The flow chart also shows that MC progress is rolled for in EACH TURN of spring, summer and fall – so a die is rolled again for each MC. The result of ‘four’ moves the Apennines marker one box towards Austrian victory. The roll for the Po Valley is a three, shifting towards the Bourbon win.

What matters to Haddock and the Royal Navy is that the progress of both campaigns is affected by actions at sea.

In effect whenever the Royal Navy succeeds with various *Show of Force* and *Support Army* Orders, a positive (that is helpful to Austria) modification is made to that Turn’s die-rolls for the two military campaigns. Of course the Spanish are doing the same thing and to make matters worse, they can send a troop convoy. If that arrives they get an AUTOMATIC box shift in their favour (albeit in lieu of the regular die roll).

Orders:

It would help if we got our hands on the ‘Escort’ Order. Once obtained we can assign it to any single Squadron (called an Independent Squadron), allowing it to stack with and move with the convoy. This is the only certain way of ensuring that it is defended (an enemy could always engage an ‘ordinary escort’, one in the same space as the convoy, and then send another to take out the convoy itself). But the only way of ensuring that one gets an Order is to rummage through the cup until one finds it and then, randomly select another. And that second Order *must* be retained in Hand, no matter how inconvenient it is. There is another possible complication looming. The ‘Trouble in the West Indies’ event means serious trouble for us as ships would be stripped from our command. There is another Event – ‘Flota’ – which is comparably nasty for the Bourbons – but that does not appear until summer. The real problem is that we cannot form a decent single SOL Squadron and therefore an eligible escort as our forces at Gibraltar are so unbalanced. In particular we had to form two weak Squadrons as no more than one Flagship can be assigned to one. Further a Formation that contains a Flagship *must* be commanded by an Admiral, a lowly Commodore being too demeaning for their majesty. So we will have to instead create a Flotilla there and it will have to be led by an Admiral. Hopefully its great ships will discourage a Spanish attack. But we might as well get the Escort Order now as will certainly be needed later.

‘Escort’ is found and then ‘Interdict Sicilian Channel’ is pulled.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: SOL Squadrons A and B with the *Barfleur* and *Neptune* are formed into Flotilla B and Admiral Lestock randomly chosen as the commander (well not randomly as he was the only one around!). Right now it is ‘In Ordinary’ – when putting to sea it will be ‘Ready’. Two are formed at Port Mahon. C, D and E Squadrons (including both flagships) are grouped into the Grand Flotilla, led by Admiral Haddock (as Fleet Admiral and the Senior Ranking Leader, he MUST command this Formation), with a Fireship Auxiliary attached. F SOL Squadron goes into Detachment A, with Captain Martin randomly picked as its Commodore.

As it is no longer winter it makes sense to request Reinforcements from England:

The problem with Reinforcements is that they arrive with Damage Points, but outside winter these are reduced from two to one. On the Reinforcement Requests Table (found in the British Scenario Book) are four columns. We roll once on EACH of these, allocating the final results to Squadrons in Port (that is In Ordinary or Fitting Out – which is the case with all of ours). There are two important modifiers: First Haddock must pass his Strategy Check, tricky since his is merely three (the lowest of any Royal Navy Admiral). But it succeeds so the results will shift up one level. It would also be possible for us to spend Prestige points to help the result, but that is too risky (*both sides started with 8 Prestige but the Bourbons are ahead on successful Orders*). After four rolls the result is one SOL (placed in B, now with two ships but also 1 DP) and two SOL(D) in a new Squadron at Gibraltar (P reborn) added to Lestock’s force. We nearly *lost* an Auxiliary with a roll of nine, but the strategy mod of UP one level saved us.

The Victualling Convoy now has 10 Repair Points

Recover Auxiliaries: The Fleet Auxiliary fails to Recover and remains in the box

Conduct Attrition: All three Squadrons In Ordinary at Gibraltar receive 1 DP (*note that if Lestock stays in Port each will get 2 DP next Turn. Ordinary is not a state ships should remain in for long*).

Return Squadrons from Fitting Out: To Ordinary come the four strong SOL Squadrons with their two Flagships at Mahon and the newly arrived SOL(D) at Gibraltar.

Conduct Repairs: As before, one die roll per Port and only for Squadrons Fitting Out. At Port Mahon two more DPs off Squadron G, now down to 4 DPs (*the remaining three SOL(D) will have to suffer until the convoy gets there*); at Gibraltar Q, the weak 50-gun Squadron is reduced from 6 DPs to 2 DPs (the best possible roll).

TURN SIX:

Wind Table: No seasonal winds in play

Impulse One: Lestock leaves Gibraltar Port (his Squadrons become Ready) and is auto-Spotted in the Straits – (reported as three Squadrons with six SOL, two Flagships and one Auxiliary). The Convoy with its 10 points is placed in the Gut Sea Zone where it is safe.

Because of the potential for Enemy contact, the strict movement rules are applied. Lestock's Formation moves one MP Increment at a time, and we let the Bourbon player announce whether he intends to put to sea (since he must mark his moves first). But the Bourbon player is impatient and tells us to just 'go ahead and move already'.

The British player can rely on one rule (*Mistral 2.32*) which is that the cowardly Spanish cannot leave Port without an Order (i.e. to intercept us) unless a Spotted Formation is within two Spanish MPs of that Port. In practise this means the convoy is safe unless the Spanish had been given an Order in the last Administrative Phase. And so it proves – the convoy Catches the Wind (*explained next Turn*) to leave the Gut to Salé, moves to the Strait and together with Lestock enters Gibraltar. In reality all that we know about the Spanish is that they have at least six SOL, but possible far more – as they could have been taking Reinforcements all winter. They could also be fully Repaired.

Impulse Two to Four: No actions.

Administrative Phase:

Events: Neither (again a sigh of relief); Military Campaigns – Po and Apennines both shift towards Austrian.

Orders: No pick by us.. But Martin is given an 'Interdict – Sicilian Channel'. Haddock has no Order, but is still free to leave Port.

Assign Auxiliaries: Nah.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: Actions can be done in any order, but it is easier to create new Formations first and then add forces as required. At Gibraltar the convoy transfers three Repair Points to Gibraltar – leaving it with seven. Far fewer Reinforcements this Turn – poor rolls and a Haddock strategy failure result in just one SOL(D) added to Q at Gibraltar, increasing Q's DPs to three in the process.

Recover Auxiliaries: The Fleet Auxiliary recovers and moves to available.

Conduct Attrition: The seven Squadrons In Ordinary or Ready each receive 1 DP.

If a Squadron is In Ordinary for two successive Turns it gets two, not one DP in the latter Turn. In other words, once your ships leave the docks get them to sea as soon as possible! In passing, this rule exists because the water in most ports was conducive to rot, while the port's pleasures were likely to rot the sailors, for damage points reflect the decay of both ship and sailors.

Return Squadrons from Fitting Out: None

Conduct Repairs: Gibraltar can now do Repair rolls. But the only one worth doing is the now full strength Q. One precious repair point brought by the convoy is spent, reducing its two-ship SOL(D) to 1 DP.

From now on we will ignore the exact accumulation of DP's, assuming that all those not under Repair will increase by one per Turn.

TURN SEVEN:

Wind Table: At last we have luck as a three is rolled for the Levanter – a miss would have been inconvenient, a two or less disastrous!

Impulse One: Lestock leaves Gibraltar with three squadrons with six SOL, two Flagships, one Auxiliary and a convoy), and proceeds to breeze his way towards Port Mahon, sailing north-east with the Levanter behind him. Even with a Movement Allowance of only three it will take just over an Impulse to pass Cartagena (to Space #2). At the same time Haddock leaves Mahon sailing to the west to meet the convoy. Note that to do so he must sail along a non-active Seasonal Wind lane, requiring a Catch the Wind roll to enter each large space along the route. This requires a 0-4 but Haddock, while ancient, has a respectable Leadership Rating of four which gives a -1. Success allows a move to the next large Space.

Once again we can dispense with the formal MPI routine, since the Spanish will not stir.

Impulse Two: Both Formations sail towards each other and after converging sail together towards Port Mahon (*note that even if in the same space these are NOT 'stacks' and therefore cannot move 'at the same time'.* But when no Enemy force is near it is reasonable to assume that they are in practise sailing together. If an Enemy was adjacent one would have to move them one after another to allow the Bourbons a chance of fighting each separately). And talking of Bourbons, while all this is happening a Formation (or dummy) of French (or Spanish or both) ships leaves Toulon bound for Barcelona. We could have assigned a 50-Auxiliary with their unlimited range to find out what is going on, but they will be wanted to support the land campaigns.

Impulse Three and Four: Everyone reaches their destination – the Bourbons at Barcelona, the British at Port Mahon. Because we could not use an *Escort* Order with the convoy we do not get to score; if we had one, now would be the time when our success would be marked.

Administrative Phase:

Orders: Yet again no *Corsica Insurgency* or *West Indies*. The Bourbon player is picking additional Orders. We will wait till next Turn and then select one that will help the Austrians – if executed in the first Turn of summer they will be the most effective and that will give lots of time to execute the ‘unwanted’ one that will also finish up in our hand.

Assign Auxiliaries: Am very tempted to keep an eye on Barcelona but again – unless a Formation sent – an Auxiliary is likely to be just blown away by a sortie.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: Major reorganisation takes place at Port Mahon, ready for the summer actions. Lestock loses B which is transferred to Matthews who in turn hands over E to a new Formation led by Captain Barnett. There are now four formations at Mahon, those under Matthews, Lestock, Martin and Barnett. Reinforcement results are very average, with one SOL added to G at Port Mahon (now with three points).

Return Squadrons from Fitting Out: SOL G and also SOL(D) at Gibraltar.

Repair: None – the nine points at Mahon will be desperately needed when ten or more Squadrons return from their summer cruises.

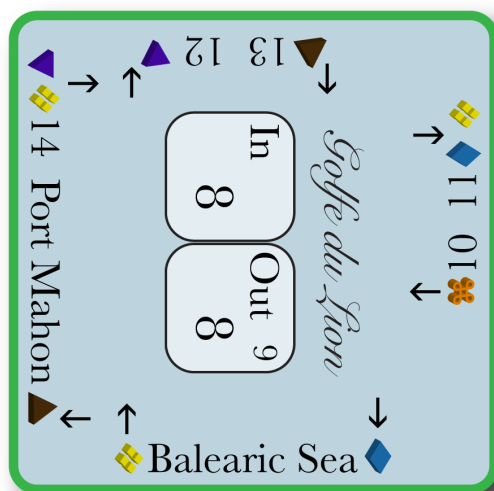
TURN EIGHT:

Wind Table: Another convenient result - no seasonal winds

Impulse One: Martin (bearing the ‘*Sicilian Channel*’ order) leaves Port Mahon and sails die east into the Golfe du Lion Sea Zone.

These boxes on the map represent areas of open water, far from coastlines. Their great advantage is that a Formation is safe from attack when in one (it was highly unusual for a naval battle to take place far from the land), the problem is that one must Catch the Wind to enter or leave. This chance is greatly hindered or helped according to whatever Seasonal Wind is blowing and there is always a chance that the Formation will not emerge where one intended! However they do provide the best means of crossing open seas and they can reduce Admirals to gibbering rage by allowing hostile forces to seemingly vanish.

Note the rules here often refer to both MP and Increment: In most cases these are one and the same as the four point movement rate of ships of the line equals the number of Increments. The distinction is to allow fast ships, like frigates (Fleet Auxiliaries in *this* game) with a MA of five, to move faster through a region, while sluggish ones such as Flagships can take longer.



The process is straightforward: The expenditure of 1 MP and Martin enters the ‘In Box’. In the next Increment (i.e. costing one MP more in most cases) he must roll against the ‘In’ Box number (in this case eight) to Catch the Wind and enter. A successful roll of eight or less and he is placed inside the Sea Zone box itself. Next he spends 1 MP and is placed in the ‘Out Box’ where the process is similar, spend an Increment and rolls to leave. In the Golfe du Lion the departure number is also eight. Therefore two successful rolls means that Martin would spend 4 MPs in the Sea Zone (and waste 4 MP Increments).

There are a couple of variables to remember. As always when Catching the Wind a decent Leadership Rating helps, while when a Seasonal Wind is blowing its direction has a major impact on the chance of smoothly passing through the zone. For example imagine that the Tramontana wind was blowing from the east as Martin tried to exit, sailing to the east. Then there would be an ADVERSE modifier of two – in this case Martin would have to roll seven or less (+2 for the Tramontana blowing against, -1 for his leadership rating) to leave the Out Box. If the Tramontana was at gale force the modification increases from +2 to +3).

Every Out Box has an additional, smaller number – in this case 9. After the Formation is placed in the intended space outside the zone roll one die. If the result is equal to or higher than that number (with no modifiers in favour allowed) then the Formation is displaced one space to the side (roll another die if there is a choice). Note that the Gale DRM applies to this roll as well.

Impulse Two: Overlooked while doing these calculations were two Bourbon Formations (or dummies) that had left Naples. One is clearly sailing towards Toulon, but the other did the same as Martin in reverse, entering the Tyrranean Sea Zone and equally quickly exiting at the east end of the Bouches de Bonifacios (the passage between Sardinia and Corsica) as he did from the west. Unless one side or the other reverses course, (and of course the Royal Navy never would) an engagement is imminent.

When two opposing formations are close together movement must become more precise, with each Impulse split into four movement Increments (in effect a single movement point each). If both sides have the same movement rate (commonly four) it is one per increment; if more or less then certain MPIs are skipped for the slower forces, following the order listed in rule 5.13. To avoid the complications of plotting for simultaneous movement one side (normally the Bourbon) goes second but first places under his formation one of the 'arrow chits', that show the direction he intends to go in. In this case the Bourbon (or whatever he is) could place an arrow pointing north, south, west or east (the last back into the sea-zone). But being courageous (and to allow us to have a small battle!) it is to the west. So the British player moves in whatever direction he wishes, obviously to the east, the Bourbon reveals his arrow and both finish up in the space between Corsica and Sardinia (a dreadful place to sail – but that is irrelevant for the moment).

Because this is a Strait, both are automatically Spotted (the Bourbon with just one Sail in one Squadron) in the same Space, triggering a Battle. Otherwise an Auxiliary would have to be tasked by Martin to find the Bourbon. The first step is to determine who has the Weather Gauge but a check of the table (8.22) shows that with no wind it will depend on the relative Leadership Ratings. As it turns out the Bourbon is a single Independent Squadron of Neapolitans, sailing with no commander (obviously intending to join the Spanish). With a plus three for leadership Martin gets the higher result and the Gauge. This may affect the Battle Intensity Table; looking at the Table Shifts, the Aggressive Martin with the Weather Gauge versus the 'notional commander', who is Timid, generates a -1. (Notional commanders are always Timid and have a Leadership Rating of '0'). Martin had naturally chosen 'Heavy' for Battle Intensity but the -1 drives it down to 'Medium' (a Battle could never be less than Medium in a Strait in any case). Rolling on the medium column produces a five as the final Battle Intensity.

Since it is one Squadron on another we proceed straight to the Combat Damage Table (8.33). Because the wretched Neapolitans are alone and Martin has a command rating of three, his is the 8 column, the enemy the 2. A roll of six produces 5 DP against, increased to 8 DP due to having three ships more, the British only taking 1 DP. There are no ship losses and no leader casualties, but both sides receive a 'Disorganised' marker since the Battle was of Medium or higher intensity.

Impulses Two to Three: The Enemy will continue to gingerly move towards a Spanish Port, avoiding further battle as with 8 DP a ship loss might result. Although Martin can probably fix the Disorganized state (*it basically stops one initiating Battle*) by a leadership roll, his Formation is in no condition to continue with the Order – a trip to Sicily and then back to Mahon would undoubtedly risk loss as the tally passed 10 DP. The only solution is to 'Hand Over' – in effect giving a new Formation the right to meet with Martin and finishing the job for him, for when he gets back to Mahon the damaged Squadrons will need to be Repaired which means that the Formation will disband. The Order must be transferred before then,

Impulse Four: Martin reaches Port Mahon, and the Naples Squadron arrives untouched at Cartagena.

Administrative Phase:

Events: Yet again the Corsican or the West Indies Events are missed. But the Bourbons must be quite concerned over the Military Campaigns with the Austrians close to success in the Po Valley. On the other hand just a single roll by them will produce success in the Apennines, so we too must take action.

Orders: The best bet is the *Show of Force versus Naples* Order as this affects both Military Campaigns, selecting this we also randomly receive *Cruise African Coast*. The *Interdict Sicilian Channel* order is 'Handed Over' from Martin to Barnett, the *Show of Force versus Naples* assigned to Lestock. Matthews himself does not need an Order – he can happily sail around chasing Bourbon fleets.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: A series of very disappointing rolls produces nothing. It is difficult to decide where to assign forces, either to Matthews to intercept the convoy from Cartagena or Lestock to attack Naples. In the end Lestock will sail with A, his flag in *Barfleur*; together with D (four SOL), G (three SOL), P with two SOL(D) and a Bomb Auxiliary. Not strong but hopefully enough to challenge any Bourbon ships that operate on the Italian coast after he finishes his show of force. All of the Auxiliaries are either in Mahon or posted to Haddock.

Attrition: Most Squadrons are now at four but Martin has reached 6 DP – time to recover!

Repair: none

Squadrons to Fitting Out: SOL Squadron F is placed on the 6 DP box and Martin's Formation (currently In Ordinary) is dissolved after Haddock passes a Strategy Check allowing Martin to be voluntarily Relieved.

TURN NINE: SUMMER

Wind Table: This is the best season for sailing – only the Libeccio blowing from Africa is likely and it will not affect Formations this Turn. As this is the first Turn of Summer and from now until the end of Fall, a roll is made on the Pirate Activation Table – in this case a two means none are active.

Piracy was a scourge in both peace and war. When the great powers were not fighting each other they regularly sent major expeditions to ‘punish’ the Arab states along the African coastline that housed, protected and in practise encouraged pirates. Both the Spanish and French navies had attacked their ports less than ten years before this war started and the process would continue until the Royal Navy ruined Algiers in 1816 and the French and Spanish controlled the region in the following decades. But even when at war political pressure from merchants meant that admirals had to detach frigates and 50-gunners to harass and capture pirates. This is shown by rolling on the Pirate Activation Table in summer and fall. When a pirate becomes active two actions are taken:

The player with the lowest Prestige (that would be us right now!) takes the matching Pirate Auxiliary and places it where it would most offend the Enemy. They cannot do much – just Interdict Sea Zones and attack Trade Convoys. (if not dealt with, each Pirate Interdiction acts like a Failed Order – i.e. a ‘black mark’ – against the affected player). And what convoys, one might ask? Each side has a ‘Levant’ convoy for whose appearance one starts rolling, usually in the Fall but in the Spring for the British outbound convoy. This was ignored until now since without any risk of interception it was irrelevant. But in the upcoming Fall turns the French and the British homebound convoys will be at risk – and this of course forces Admirals to detach valuable warships to drive away the Pirates or use up Auxiliaries that can Screen against them. Of course one can get help from the ‘good pirates’, the Knights of Malta, who can be used, by both players (at a cost), to Screen the Arab Pirates.

The second activity is more significant: Whenever a Pirate Base is activated BOTH players add a matching Show of Force Order to their cups. When drawn and fulfilled that stops the activity of that Pirate (only). What this means is that as Summer arrives Haddock (and his Bourbon opponent) are being deluged with more and more demands on their limited resources.

Impulse One: *(from this point on we concentrate on the movements of Formations, passing over the details of course and Attrition since ships are active across the Mediterranean).*

Barnett sails east towards Sicily - it will take all summer for his Order to be fulfilled (two Turns on station and at least one getting there and another returning. Of course by then his DP level will be touching ten and Repair at Port Mahon will be essential. Lestock sails for Naples, with a speed of three (that of the *Barfleur*) he will take two Turns to arrive, even using the Sea Zones. From Barcelona a Bourbon Formation emerges, clearly bound for Italy. This is the chance that Haddock has been waiting for but it is not until the second Increment (*Remember that the order of movement is VERY strict – essential when avoiding the complexities of pre-plotting – and that the British are player B, thus moving first, while the Bourbons are Player A and use the directional markers*) that he can both sortie from Port Mahon and attempt to spot the Enemy Formation.

Spotting, Searching and Shadowing: These actions are all-important when seeking Battle. In simple summary, the process begins with sending (‘Tasking’) Auxiliaries of various types and range to the Space where the Enemy is. He can then counter with his own (‘Screening’) Auxiliaries which may be good enough to send the searching frigates away – the Screen was ‘effective’. If not effective then a die is rolled to see if the Enemy Formation was ‘Spotted’. While this gives information about the Formation it is not very helpful in ensuring a Battle unless the two sides are in the same Space. If one wants the Enemy to remain Spotted it must be ‘Shadowed’ as it continues to sail. This can only take place when the previous Spotting result was both successful and allowed Shadowing. Of course Gales, entering harbour or successful Screening will terminate the Shadow. In practise success is heavily dependent on the type and number of Auxiliaries involved – which is why Haddock was carefully concentrating his best at Port Mahon.

Fully aware of the importance of this Haddock Tasks against the Bourbon stack a Fleet Auxiliary from his own Grand Fleet and a Light Auxiliary from Port Mahon. In this case the Bourbon counters by using two Light Auxiliaries, and since both types counter each other (Screening Matrix Table) the Screening was effective. All four go to their respective Recovery Boxes. After moving, and in the next Increment (*one can try to spot as many times as one wishes, but only once per Space*), the increasingly desperate Haddock tries again – a 50 Fleet and a Fleet Auxiliary and the Bourbon can only deploy a single Auxiliary to counter. So an ineffective Screen and a roll on the Search Table will determine success.

The type and order of use of these Auxiliaries is often important. In this case had we assigned the Light Auxiliary first the survivor (the one used to determine the roll) would have been a 50-gun variant, and they have an adverse modifier to show their inferior capability in this respect (the problem being that they were less capable of sailing towards the wind than were frigates and therefore less able to avoid enemy ships). Note also that Light Auxiliaries and Galleys can only be assigned to Ports. Galleys of course had problems away from the coast (hence their very limited range) while the ‘Light Auxiliary’ represents vessels such as cutters and sloops. Although very effective as scouting vessels their small size limited their range – in this period ‘range’ was largely a function of storage space compared with crew size so that small ships with the crews needed to man 10-20 guns were limited in range. In contrast the Fleet Auxiliaries with the ‘U’ symbol are modern frigates or corvettes, with a range only limited by the stamina of its crew and the persistence of its captain. Those with ranges of one or two are the older designs, made less capable by over-gunning (if British) or with a very low freeboard (if Bourbon).

In this case a fortunate roll of two means both Spot and Shadow. However when the Formation is revealed to contain six Squadrons (19 Sail), three Flagships, two Auxiliaries and a Convoy, Haddock becomes exceedingly concerned, especially over the presence of three big ships. It is possible that the Spanish, by concentrating and by fortunate reinforcement could muster 20 or so ships, but they only have two Flagships, the *Real Felipe* and the *Santa Isabella*. The existence of a third means that the Formation that sailed from Toulon to Barcelona contained not just Spanish, but also French ships in uncertain number. Every patriotic impulse (and of course the hope of prestige, money and a lordship) pushes Haddock to attack, which he should be able to achieve at some point. But doing so will cost three Prestige Points (Mistral Rule 2.42) and push the French into war, which is not acceptable. So instead, we will follow the Shadowed fleet, collect Auxiliaries together again and hope that Bourbon division will result in a split command.

Impulses Two to Three: Lestock closes on Naples while the Bourbon Formation, with Haddock close behind, heads along the coasts to Italy, the destination any one of Coastal Spaces B-D but forced, by the Troop Convoy, to follow a randomly selected path (all of these convoy paths are listed in the Convoy Route Chart in the tables).

Impulse Four: Lestock reached Naples at the end of Impulse Three (he was not delayed in either the Golfe du Lion or Tyrrhenian Sea Zones. He will have to stay there four Impulses (but at this point the rules will be ‘bent’ to avoid repetition, assuming that four Impulses pass in an instant!). The Bourbons reach Zone B (close to Genoa).

When Lestock “succeeds” his Order Chit is placed in Naples (since it will be effective until the end of Summer) with the Bomb-Auxiliary, which turns out to be highly useful, placed with it (check the Order instructions in the British scenario booklet for details). Although we have ‘won’ we do not get the Prestige Point yet – that will be received at the end of Summer when the Order Chit is removed and placed back in the Orders cup. At the same time the Bomb Auxiliary will be sent to its Recovery Box. If a Show of Force Order Chit is on the map (and of course the Bourbons can do the same thing) then until the Season changes the Military Campaign die-rolls are modified. In this case the Mistral Event Instruction Book shows that that a Naples Show of Force will affect the Apennine Campaign die roll by one (two with the Bomb) and the Po Campaign by two (three with the Bomb), obviously in favour of the Allies.

The Bourbon can take his Prestige Point at once. Since the Troop Convoy will not need to appear again some comments may be useful: there is a choice of ‘Bourbon Troop Convoy mechanic’ (Mistral rule 2.34 gives the choices), and the players must agree on a particular method and stick to it for the entire game. The convoys have a variable chance of appearing, for after all embarkation was a messy and chancy event at the time, from Spring on. Like all convoys they MUST follow a randomly chosen but very specific path (found in the Convoy Route Chart in the tables) and do so as quickly as possible.

Administrative Phase:

Events: The Bourbon player is now exceedingly active with die-rolling in this stage. To the previous Corsica, West Indies, Po Valley and Apennines Events are added The Flota (*like the West Indies an event that sends ships out of the Mediterranean, but affecting the Bourbons not the British*). Aargh!!! The West Indies is rolled – not good news. The Military Campaigns are affected by the success of both sides: First, in EITHER the Po or the Apennines the chit moves one Space towards the Bourbons for a successful Troop Convoy; and then as described above, the die-rolls are modified in favour of the Allies by Lestock’s Show of Force against Naples.

Caveat: remember that the Show of Force Order applies to both MCs. But, the Bourbon adjustment is in *lieu* of a die roll. This means that if, for example, the Po Valley had been ‘assisted’ by the Troop Convoy, the British player’s DRM for this MC would be irrelevant, since no die roll will take place. The British DRM would still apply to the Apennines MC.

Events such as ‘West Indies’ and ‘Flota’ are exceedingly unwelcome and annoying to the affected player, but reflect the realities of this war. For the safety of the West Indies, or rather its plantations, was the dominant political issue of the time, not surprising since even a single island was worth more in goods and taxes than the whole of North America and especially so since the wealthy plantation owners had immense political power. As a result thousands of troops died protecting their islands and dozens of warships were diverted into protecting their convoys. With the collapse of the attempts to take Cartagena des Indes and Havana the Admiralty was concerned about the activities of the Spanish Fleet and blithely removed ships from the Mediterranean. They were also worried that the French would again send a fleet there – which is why the implementation of this triggers the chance that the Event ‘Brest Fleet Sorties!’ may take place. That would be even worse news for the Royal Navy.

All this, including triggers, frequency and effects are documented in the Mistral Event Instruction Book. The orders however are described in the British and Bourbon Scenario Books and summarised in the two Orders Charts.

Orders: Two picked – one kept, the highly useful ‘Support Apennine Army’. The obvious target is Lestock, who is now leaving Naples at a loose end. But he is Active (at sea) so an order can only be issued if Haddock as the Fleet Admiral manages to pass his Strategy Rating. Alas he fails. The ‘Cruise African Coast’ Order is retained in the hope that more ships arrive at Gibraltar.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: This time lucky – Haddock again fails his strategy roll but even so two SOL(D) are received – both are sent to Gibraltar and Formed into a new Flotilla, Captain Martin yet again blindly selected to command.

Recover Auxiliaries: Both sides scramble to recover the Auxiliaries used up in the Search attempts. Most do but the precious Fleet Auxiliary fails.

Attrition: Getting serious now – with almost all Squadrons running at 5 DP, enough to cause trouble after a Battle.

Repair: Mahon uses its precious seasonal roll to Repair what used to be Martin's SOL command – reduced to 6DP

Squadrons to Fitting Out: none

TURN TEN:

Wind Table: No Seasonal Winds, not even the Libeccio. Pirate roll is a six – Tunis, and a Barbary Corsair is placed there and 'Show of Force – Tunis' added to both Orders cups.

Impulse One: The first concern is to meet the needs of the 'Trouble in the West Indies' Event. It requires that four Sail exit west through the Gut no later than the end of the following Turn (that is Turn Eleven). We could gamble and say that reinforcements in the next admin phase will take care of part of the problem, but then nothing can handle the 'African Cruise' Event. Haddock has to forget about following the Bourbon fleet (he cannot attack the joint force anyway) and heads for Port Mahon, while the Bourbons move towards Toulon. We move the Pirate to the Golfe du Lion, the most likely place to annoy the Spanish. Lestock wanders home along the Italian coast.

Impulse Two and Three: Lestock sails north towards Genoa, the Bourbons enter Toulon and Haddock closes on Port Mahon (note that all three are travelling quickly with the prevailing winds).

Impulse Four: Lestock stays off Genoa (hoping that next Turn a decent Order is sent to him), Martin stays in Gibraltar.

Administrative Phase:

Events: Even though 'Brest Fleet' (triggered by the 'West Indies' taking place) is also being rolled for no Events go into effect. The Bourbons are in serious trouble in the Po and the Apennines as our Show of Force remains in effect.

Orders: We select none, but obviously the Bourbons are busy! Haddock finally rolls his Strategy Rating, allowing the 'Support Apennine Army' to be Issued to Lestock.

Reinforcements and Reorganisation: The only positive result was a single Flagship – but this is pointless as there are only four in the counter mix and all are in play. To ensure that enough ships reach the Gut and comply with the West Indies Order a new Formation with two SOL and two Flagship Squadrons is established with Cornwall under command (*from now on we will ignore the designations of Squadrons unless involved in action*).

Recover Auxiliaries: Once again failure – which means we have NO unlimited range Auxiliaries available.

Attrition: Most Squadrons at 6 DP (Martin at Gibraltar has 2 DP)

This level of Damage means trouble. A check of the Damage Effects Table shows that when a squadron up to 2/3rds of its Damage Rating (10 for the British) it is more difficult for it to reinforce a Battle. But if MORE than 2/3rds, its MA is reduced by one. So starting next Turn most Squadrons will have a MA of just three, those with flagships a mere two. By the end of next Turn it would be wise to have our ships heading for repair!

Repair: Mahon uses up one of its Repair Points for the single SOL Squadron in Ordinary (Martin's old command). Now down to 4 and will be brought to Ordinary next Turn.

Squadrons to Fitting Out: none

TURN ELEVEN:

Wind Table: The Libeccio is in play, but not at Gale Force. Pirate roll is a three – no effect.

Impulse One: Movement everywhere! Lestock reverses direction now that he has an Order that requires him to be on station at Coastal Space D, between Elba and Naples. He will be sailing against the wind. Cornwall has to Catch the Wind leaving Mahon. However once he does Catch the Wind he will be sailing with it to the south-west with just enough time to reach the Gut and exit. To be certain of this Martin is forced to wait before starting his sail east towards Tunis. There are two Bourbon movements, one from Cartagena (they still have ships there!) south towards Africa and then east, the other from Toulon into the Golfe du Lion Sea Zone.

Impulse Two: Lestock is on station and will have to stay there to complete the Order while the Toulon force leaves the Sea Zone heading east between Sardinia and Corsica. Cornwall manages to Catch the Wind and is now sailing with it towards Gibraltar.

Impulse Three: Martin leaves Gibraltar heading east, the Bourbon exits the Bouches de Bonifacio and turns north reaching the Italian coast close to Elba. Lestock has just been successfully Searched, so his Formation marker is flipped and the report made – 'three Squadrons, nine Sail, one Flagship, no Auxiliaries' (*the Bomb Auxiliary remains at Naples until the end of the Turn*).

It is at times like this that a fleet commander (us) must balance chances and options. Lestock is at the right place to complete the Order and it will be in effect in the first Impulse of Turn 12. The bad part is that it will only be useful in

the Administrative Phase of Turn 12 (these effects only last during a four-Turn Season). So to cut and run is not that great a penalty, while starting a Battle with a damage level of at least six is not wise. On the other hand a victory will gain some useful Prestige points, especially since we are behind on completed Orders, and so allow Admiral Haddock to retire in glory and Admiral Lestock demonstrate his magnificent leadership. If only the Enemy could be Spotted a more rational judgement could be made but Lestock has no Auxiliaries with him and of course the only others are at Mahon, far out of range. We are paying the price for our reckless use of the best Auxiliaries when Searching for the Spanish Convoy. But in the end the decision is simple – we are British and they but Spanish, so obviously it will be a triumph. The decision is taken to stay and fight.

Impulse Four: Cornwall clears Gibraltar, enters the Gut and sails off to the West Indies; Martin approaches Tunis, where the Bourbon already is; Barnett continues to stand at the Sicilian Channel and the Enemy moves south and enters the same space as Lestock. Battle commences, making the Bourbon Spotted and determined to be three Squadrons, twelve Sail, one Flagship, two Auxiliaries. The initial stages are the same as the earlier skirmish in the Straits, repeated here for convenience and in order:

- determine the Weather Gauge, affected by Lestock -5 on station, Bourbon -8 approaching *against* wind, Leadership Ratings identical (Lestock and Navarro both 4); a roll gives the British the Weather Gauge
- no Withdrawal or Reinforcement, this being when multiple Formations could retreat from, or join up for Battle
- Leaders to Squadrons: naturally Lestock is placed with *Barfleur*
- Battle Intensity: Lestock chooses Medium (his high Damage Points advise against High Intensity)
- Damage Level: Lestock is Timid, Navarro Cautious, the result is one left to Light Intensity, then Damage Level three
- Engaged Squadrons: at this point the players must ‘leave out of battle’ Squadrons in excess of their Admirals Command Rating. Lestock (as a rear-admiral) has a pitiable one, Navarro (also when a rear-admiral) two.

So the great fight would degenerate into a low level brawl of nine SOL against five, one which Lestock would undoubtedly lose given the odds and the presence of the powerful Spanish flagship.

But that would be boring and not very interesting. Instead we will assume that both players were operating at maximum strength, adding for this example subordinate Leaders that allow all Squadrons to come into play. When large fleets (those with at least two Squadrons on each side) engage the rules simulate the controls under which they operated.

This was the age when the Line of Battle and the Rules of Engagement mattered, when individual initiative could lead to punishment even if successful. Every admiral and captain knew with certainty that only two actions mattered – to keep station in the line of battle and, even more important, to ‘second’ or support a neighbour that was engaged. In practise this meant that fleets fought in the order in which they were arranged, while the intensity with which each fleet and squadron battled was determined by the decisions of the admirals alone.

Once a Battle is initiated both players SECRETLY remove their Squadrons from the display charts, making sure that their orientation (strength at top!) is retained and recording their damage point level (this can be done with number chits or by writing down the number, but the easiest way is to slide the counters slightly up from their Damage Tracks once assigned to a Combat, then slide the back onto the track (with any accrued Damage) at the end of the Combat). These are then arranged from left to right in order of Damage, those with the same grouped side by side (in effect one is recreating the line of battle). Then the side that LOST the Weather Gauge picks one of his own Squadrons, the other chooses one of his (this imitates the initial tactical edge the better position gave) and they fight. What matters is that both must, for the next Combat, pick the next Squadron to the *right* (that is with equal or greater DP). There are two exceptions – imagine that Lestock was brave, then he could have at any time (though most effectively at the start) called out ‘Admiral’, upon which ‘his’ Squadron – the one to which *Barfleur* is attached – is matched against that of Navarro in the *Real Felipe* & Squadron. This could not occur if Navarro had already been assigned to a Combat, or if there were no Admiral to challenge him (Commodores do not qualify!). The other variable takes place if one side has more Squadrons than the other. Depending on the degree of Intensity that would allow for ‘doubling’, that is two or more Squadrons against one.

[Note also that while the rules state that all Combats are arranged in advance, the players may agree to initiate and conduct each in turn. This may give them a better ‘feel’ and allows for some uncertainty as the Battle progresses. It also enables them to keep their Squadrons on their respective Damage Tracks]

Below is a typical deployment:

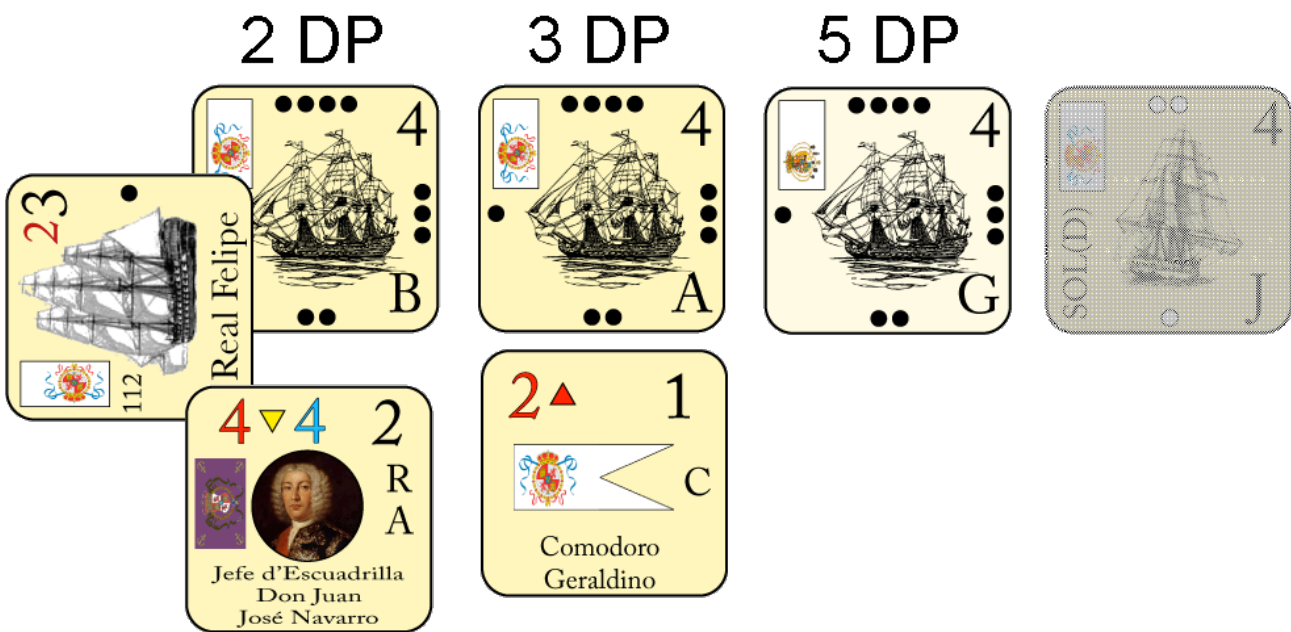
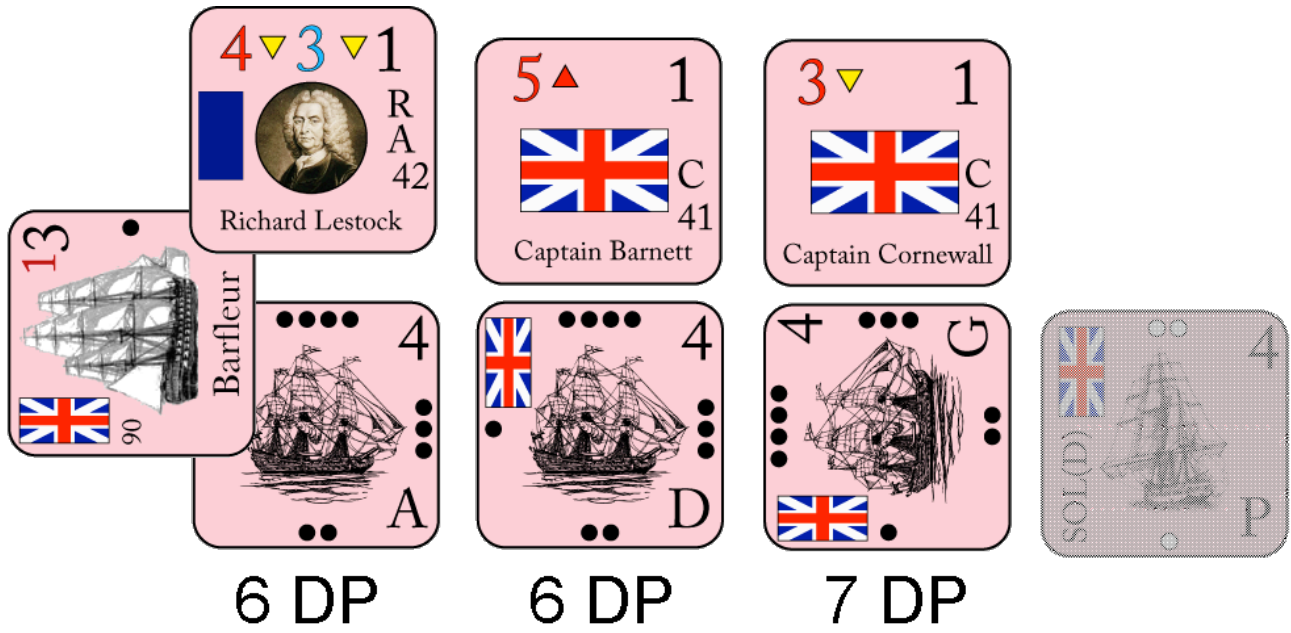
British

SOL A, 4 ships, 6 DP, Lestock, *Barfleur*
 SOL D, 4 Ships 6 DP, Barnett
 SOL G, 3 ships, 7 DP, Cornwall
 SOL(D) P: *out of battle*

Spanish

SOL B, 4 ships, 2 DP, Geraldino
 SOL A, 4 ships, 3 DP, Navarro, *Real Felipe*
 SOL G, 4 ships, 5 DP (Neapolitan)
 SOL(D) J; *out of battle*

The out of battle forces are out of battle because they exceed the Leaders’ combined CRs – Navarro’s CR of ‘2’ allows him to include the Neapolitans as well as his own Squadron.



Example One: ‘Flagship’ called at start: *remember final Damage Column was three:*

Leadership Rating of Navarro (four) versus Lestock (four): no shifts

Squadron Modifier *Real Felipe* 2 versus *Barfleur* 1: shift from 3 to 4 for Bourbon, to 2 for British

Spanish Flagship: damage one less for Bourbon.

Die roll is zero (!) – result is 3 (4 – 1) DP Bourbon, ship Sunk for British and Leadership roll (8.37) – a four means Lestock lightly wounded

Example Two: Second Combat must be D against A

Leadership Rating Barnett (five!) versus Geraldino (two) shift from 3 to 1 for Bourbon, to 6 for British

Die roll is five – result is 4 DP Bourbon, 1 DP British

Example Three: G versus G

Leadership Rating Cornwall three versus none: shift from 3 to 0 for Bourbon, to 6 for British

Difference in Sail: add one to Enemy Damage for each additional Sail

Die roll is three – result is 7 DP for the Bourbons, 1 for the British (die roll was 0 but plus one for extra sail)

Note that if ‘Flagship’ had not been called and both started from their lowest DP the Combats would be as initially listed, that is Lestock versus Geraldino, Barnett against Navarro and Cornwall versus the Naples contingent.

At this point the Bourbons have won in terms of ships lost. But it is also necessary after a Battle to determine if accumulated Damage Points could also result in loss. In the case above the only one at risk is the Neapolitan Squadron, which started with 5 DP and added another 7 for a total of 12. So a die must be rolled and if the result is two or less a Sail is lost. (*Note that if this had been a Spanish Squadron then no roll would take place, since Spanish have a defence rating of 14, not 10. Of course if it had been a Spanish Squadron it could have been commanded by a Spanish Commodore in which case the result would have been very different!*)

It is probably best to stop the account at this point. Had Lestock been wounded it would have forced his Squadron with the *Barfleur* to return to base as he was the only Admiral around, while the remaining two Squadrons would have almost certainly lost the next Battle with Navarro. They too would have been forced to leave the Space, thus causing the Order to fail. As for the rest of the Royal Navy – it can be assumed that Martin succeeded in his ‘African Cruise’ but only if he was able to defeat the matching Bourbon 50-gun Squadron that was already at Tunis (it was attempting to execute a ‘Show of Force’ against the Pirates there). Navarro (the success story of the scenario) would then have continued with his passage towards his destination – the Adriatic Sea – to fulfil his ‘Po Valley Show of Force’. He might even have been able, with some luck, to drive off Barnett before he completed his Sicilian Cruise just as he did Lestock (note that it is perfectly permissible for a Formation with an Order to fight as long as it is ‘on the way’ to the location of that Order).

Assuming that the game ended at this point the various successes and failures add up to:

- British lose with the failure at Barcelona early in the year
- Bourbon win with African cruise early in the year
- British win with Show of Force against Naples
- Bourbon win with Convoy to Italy
- British win with Sicilian Cruise (a maybe, assuming that Navarro does not intervene)
- British lose with failure to Support Army (after Lestock’s defeat)
- Bourbon win as Navarro defeats Lestock (as one ship lost)

And in terms of what was learnt: that as usual when war-gaming there is a tendency to do too much, too early and with too much! As a result, as early as the middle of Summer the Royal Navy was spread all over the Western Mediterranean, at one point with no fewer than five Formations active and most already with too much Damage and desperate to enter Port and Repair. Of all of the errors the most important was the failure to use the Leaders correctly. There are very few of them available and because most have a derisory Command Rating they should always be matched to the size of the force. In particular the need to have multiple commanders when forming a large fleet was ignored in favour of sending captains scurrying across the Mediterranean in search of glory (Prestige points).

