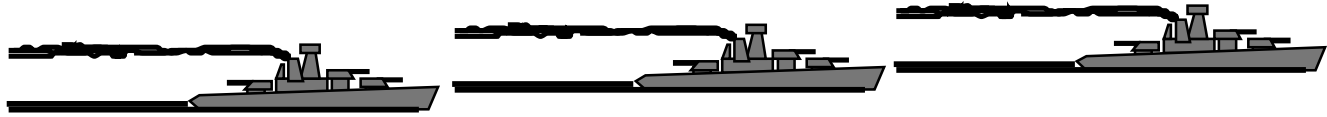


# TASK FORCE 144



The Official Newsletter of Model Warship Combat, Inc.

[www.mwci.org](http://www.mwci.org)

Spring – 2007



## CALENDAR OF MWC EVENTS

**May 04-06, 2007**

### **Southeast Springs Regional**

Tom Triplett Comm Park,  
Pooler, GA

Contact: Brian Koehler 912-764-5183

[bkoehler@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:bkoehler@georgiasouthern.edu)

Sanctioned

**May 26-28, 2007**

### **The Fray**

Ritter Springs Park,  
Springfield, MO

Contact: Kevin Bray, 479-721-7055

[kevin.bray@cox.net](mailto:kevin.bray@cox.net) Sanctioned.

**July 15-20, 2007**

### **MWC National Championship**

**H & H Ranch, Houston, TX**

**Site Host:** Brian Lamb, 281- 480-2051

[iunrais@gmail.com](mailto:iunrais@gmail.com)

Sanctioned. \$140. CO2, Mon., Tue,

Thu. noon meals prov.

#### **Motel:**

Ramada Inn Houston, \$62/night + 15%  
tax. 218-821-1304, mention "MWC" or  
"Model Warship Combat, Inc." to get  
rate.

**Aug 31 – Sept 3, 2007**

### **The Fray**

Ritter Springs Park,  
Springfield, MO

Contact: Kevin Bray, 479-721-7055

[kevin.bray@cox.net](mailto:kevin.bray@cox.net) Sanctioned



Once again battlers retire to their favorite pastime at Ritter Springs Park

Photo by Trent Thompson

## Fall Fray 2006

**By Bob Hoernemann**



With NATS in  
mid June this year  
we did not get to  
have the  
traditional Fray

event Memorial Day Weekend. Kevin Bray also lost his pond in his back yard and with it our most convenient battling location. This years Fall Fray would go old school and head back to Ritter Springs in Springfield Missouri. This pond was the location for many of the old Swampy Ozark BBfest Regional's several years ago. It is a large pond cut almost in half by a large

peninsula. The right side of the pond has two docks just tall enough to get most ships under them. Historically they have been the site of many classic battles with damaged ships jumping under the docks to try and hide from attackers. A few attackers have found themselves a little short on super structure trying to get under the dock.

Ron Horbul, Ryan Butler, Peter Ellison and I left Minnesota early Friday morning. We were able to get our six ships and all of our gear into my minivan, just barely making everything fit. When we arrived at the pond around 4pm Kevin Bray, his son Bryan, Chris Grossaint, Kevin Hovis and John Bruder were already on the water testing their



## MWC OFFICERS and Board of Directors

### President—Randy Stiponovich V

1059 S. Johnson Way  
Lakewood, CO 80226  
303-980-9904  
sinkazuki@earthlink.net

### V.P.—Andy Bruce Reg II

PO Box 54  
Elmira, MI 49730  
???-???-????  
lakerstatefan@gmail.com

### Secretary—Bob Hoernemann I

1480 Lake Susan Hills Drive  
Chanhassen, MN 55317  
952-448-8808  
r\_hoernemann@hotmail.com

### Treasurer—Brian Lamb IV

1511 Redway  
Houston, TX 77062  
281-480-2051  
iunnrais@gmail.com

### Ron Horbul Reg. I

360 Andover Blvd N.E.  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
763-786-8371  
superiorpattern@hotmail.com

### Luis Negron Reg II

215 Spencer  
Lansing, MI. 48951  
517-886-5179  
[ostfrieslanddn@yahoo.com](mailto:ostfrieslanddn@yahoo.com)

### Peter Demetri Reg III

17 Lanvale St.  
Port Wentworth, GA 30062  
912-966-2261  
pkdeme@aol.com

### Tim Krakowski Reg III

1479 Brookcliff Dr.  
Marietta, GA 30062  
770-509-1101  
tkrakows@gmail.com

### Steven Reynolds Reg IV

110 Llama Loop  
Kyle, TX 78640  
512-779-4909  
sreynolds2@austin.rr.com

### Ty Supancic Reg V

20760 Vose St.  
Winnetka, CA. 91306  
818-469-7838  
[tyger@socal.rr.com](mailto:tyger@socal.rr.com)

ships. We unpacked most of our stuff and ran some speed tests. I was at speed on the first run, the first time this has ever happened to me. Ryan and Ron had to add some bigger drag disks but made speed after a few tries. Peter burned out a throttle switch and had to finish testing the next day.

We headed over to the hotel and checked into our rooms. We had to go up to the second floor but we had an elevator near by. After we unpacked all of the captains gathered for dinner. After dinner we went back to work. Peter, Ryan and Ron all needed to test guns; Ryan and Ron needed to get connectors soldered on their new batteries and Peter needed a new set of throttle switches. I grabbed the soldering iron and went to work on the batteries. Ron helped Peter and Ryan get the guns tweaked. Only one gun had a problem. It was fixed by sanding down the head of the piston. The Texas group stopped by our room when they made it into town to say hi around 9pm. We all got to bed before midnight, early for a battle night.

Saturday morning we all packed up and grabbed some breakfast at the Waffle House next door (Ty you can get good waffles there). When we got to the pond there were already a few captains set up and getting ships ready for battle. We had our captains meeting lead by CD Kevin Hovis and host Kevin Bray. John Bruder and I were appointed admirals and started to split up the fleets.

The fleets got lopsided because Rheinland (Paul Block) was lost to the No Flag Fleet with prebattle gun problems and Tyrstan and Ryan Thompson got to the pond late and joined the Flag fleet not the No Flag Fleet.

At the start of the battle the Big Mammie went after the VDT. The I-boat and Warspite fell back to try and help him. Kevin started to look low in the water and sank with a pump failure and very light damage.

The Missouri got into the fight and was rammed by the Warspite, Kevin did not see this ram. He did see the next ram a minute latter as the Warspite backed into the portside and fired. This left a 2"x2" hole in the side of his ship. The Missouri went down quickly. Ron and Kevin H had waders on and both of them were needed to pull out this monster.

After battle was started again the I-boat, Bayern and Warspite started to chase the Barham. John was having trouble with his guns and led them on a long run around the pond. This chase went right by the Lion. The Warspite peeled off to toss a few bbs Ron's way. The Lion did not seem to be moving very fast and stayed under the Warspite's guns until his 5 was over. Turns out Ron had lost a prop. Chris Grossaint was standing next to Ron during this, he remarked the Ron's pump was not on and that he needed to stay still to avoid sinking until he pumped out. Ron look strangely at Chris as Chris was not on his fleet. With friends like that who needs enemies.

Kevin Bray missed the second sortie due to the loss of a rudder servo. At the start of the second sortie Ron and Kevin H. knew they were in trouble. Ron was shot up and Kevin was having some ship

Flag Fleet:	
Warspite	Bob Hoernemann
Invincible	Steve Reynolds
Montcalm	Chris Grossaint
Nashville	Tom Palmer
St Louis	Ryan Thompson
Graf Spee	Trystan Thompson
Bayern	Brian Lamb
Scharnhorst	Peter Ellison
VDT	Ryan Butler
No Flag fleet	
Massachusetts	Kevin Bray
Barham	John Bruder
The Bike	Bryan Bray
Lion	Ron Horbul
Missouri	Kevin Hovis
Portland	Steve Reichenbach
Rheinland	Paul Block



problems. Both of them called five as battle started. Warspite and Bayern started off after the Mighty Mo. No ships went after the Lion, but it did not take long for the first sorties damage to take its toll and the Lion went down. Meanwhile the Mo was getting worked over but the pump never came on and she sank shortly after the Lion. This pump failure was caused by a small piece of balsa wood in the pump. After the two ships were retrieved word spread that the Portland had lost rudder control. The Warspite was on the way with the Bayern and I-boat right behind. The Portland was only able to make a starboard turn but the Warspite cut off this turn and held the Portland next to its haymaker. Other Flag Fleet ships now piled in to hit the helpless cruiser as she quickly sank to the bottom.

With most of the No Flag Fleet out of the battle it turned into a long chase of the Barham. A few sidemounts were exchanged and Barham started to pump hard but there were not enough bbs left to put down one more ship. As the action was winding down the Montcalm sank. It was one of those mystery sinks where a hand just grabs the ship and pulls it under. Bryan Bray claimed the credit for this sink as he got one bb on target for the Montcalms only hole. Brian Lamb reports that he spent most of the battle chasing the faster ships. The Portland passed him by and he was only able to get a few sneaky sidemounts into the Big Mammie.

At sometime during this battle Chris G started to lose his balance moving around on the dock. He tried to grab Steve Reichebach to try and stay up (Or pull Steve in too) but instead chose to hold his radio high and jump into the water. A move only a veteran would have made, anything to save the radio.



The ram hole Warspite made in the Might MO.

Photo by Bob Hoernemann

**Flag Hit Tally:**

Warspite	(7-5-7)
Invincible	(20-1-1)
Montcalm	(1-0-0 sink)
Nashville	(4-0-1)
St Louis	(1-0-0)
Graf Spee	(3-0-0)
Bayern	(11-3-2)
Scharnhorst	(28-0-11)
VDT	(6-0-0)

**No Flag Hit Tally**

Massachusetts	(30-1-2 sink)
Barham	(36-2-14)
The Bike	(3-0-1)
Lion	(42-7-14 sink)
Missouri	(67-14-12 sink)
Portland	(56-6-4 sink)

The Flag Fleet won this battle  
9.640 to 2.535

After this battle John and a few others got a lesson in cleaning solenoids from Chris Grossaint. John also replaced the springs in his guns and changed the Barham from a single gun ship into a four gun ship for the next battle. The moral of this

story, clean and service everything and try not to battle a ship that has been sleeping in the garage for 18 months without testing it first.

The ships were quickly patched and repaired for the second battle. The admirals talked about changing fleets but decided that if the ships all worked things would be even. One change to the Flag Fleet had Caleb taking over the St Louis. On the No Flag Fleet both Kevins fixed their problems and Paul Block had the Rheinland back on the water.

Grossaint knew Ron was not on his fleet this time and was ready to take revenge. He chased Ron around the pond this time and was able to get a few aboves in him. This battle was all about chasing. There was no stern to stern hug'n'slug battling like we are used to. I spent most of the battle chasing the Barham, who was still having gun problems, all over the pond. John had fixed his guns but now his regulator was freezing

up in the cold. After a quick exchange of fire I found myself getting low in the water without the pump lighting off. I feared that it was clogged. Soon the ship righted itself, I can only guess the bottle had frozen a large block of ice in the bow that almost sank the ship. The Massachusetts was on five and the VDT went over to play. He chased Kevin around and sank himself by getting prop washed while turning.

The second sortie was also a chase around the pond. Brian Lamb had to sit out due to a low transmitter battery. He forgot to charge it at home and had to put it on Grossaint's quick charger. The I-boat was chasing the Barham so much he sank himself. Steve said he found an unknown ram hole later that helped put him down. Just as the I-boat sank and man in the water was called the Montcalm was perfectly lined up on the Lion but could not shoot. As the boats drifted the shot was lost and the Lion's sidemounts came to bear as resume battle was called. The Lion was able to get a few shots off before Montcalm pulled away. Peter said he learned a valuable lesson in this battle, don't chase sterns. The Big Mammie was happy to bring this lesson home. He also learned that he could not shoot his guns while his pump was running, some mis-wiring in the radio box. He wanted to shoot his guns and forgot to turn on his pump and sank. I found the Big Mammie just before she was done with her five and wanted to put the rest of my bbs into her hull. But, I saw my polar bear head was spinning slower than normal and called five also. I think all of my chasing in the first sortie had worn my batteries out. The Missouri saw this and came to play. I tried to stay away from the dual sidemounts by hiding under the dock. This did not work too well and Kevin was able to get some belows on me. While we were playing the Portland was steaming full speed ahead and found the St Louis in her path. There was

no stopping Sir Rams A Lot and the St Louis was run over and ram sunk.

#### Flag Hit Tally:

Warspite	(17-5-15)
Invincible	(27-10-14 sink)
Montcalm	(1-0-0)
Nashville	(9-2-3)
St Louis	(8-0-2)
Graf Spee	(2-0-0)
Bayern	(5-0-4)
Scharnhorst	(28-0-8 sink)
VDT	(8-3-0 sink)

#### No Flag Hit Tally

Massachusetts	(50-7-8)
Barham	(61-3-13)
The Bike	(8-0-1)
Lion	(49-0-3)
Missouri	(13-1-2)
Portland	(13-0-0)
Rheinland	(12-3-9)

The No Flag Fleet won this battle 6450 to 4010.

During this battle Rick Whitsell, James Foster and Jay Edwards all stopped by to say hi and relive past days of glory. They had all been to many battles at this pond in the past and shared a few good stories with us. They also wanted to compare some of the new technology to the old way of doing things.

It had been raining off and on all

day, more of a mist most times than a rain. It was about 3pm when the second battle got over and we decided to go out for a third battle. The Kevins both had ship problems again and would not be in this last battle. The Flag Fleet loaned the No Flag Fleet the Bayern and Graf Spee now run by Trent. This was finally a hug'n'slug stern to stern battle that we are use to seeing, with the Warspite and I-boat facing the Bayern and Barham.

We started out at the left of the docks and worked our way to the right. The two flag ships were able to back in faster than the Bayern was able to pull away. We hit her with a furious barrage of sidemounts and she started to pump pretty hard. I backed in with stern guns and blew a larger hole out just above the waterline. I also put a ram hole in the side but Brian did not call it during the battle. He looked like he was sunk as his pump outlet went under the water. I thought he was coasting to shore to sink but he somehow stayed afloat. I have never seen a ship come back from the edge like this, a testimony to the excellent damage control in this ship. He pulled into a patch of weeds and we



Bayern delivers a below to Invincible.

Photo by Ryan Butler



thought about leaving him there but he had started to pump out and get back to his normal water line. The Warspite and I-boat both pulled in and emptied the rest of their sidemounts into him as he backed out of the weeds and hid under the dock. I tried to go in there but bent my

purchased several years ago would not hold a charge any longer. Another valuable lesson on battery freshness was learned without great pain for the captain. Tom Palmer was the only other person to notice the plight of the Barham and did not know to call in the wolves for the

and VDT came over to empty the rest of their guns on the stuck cruiser. It was easy shooting and the stern of The Bike went under. After The Bike was pulled out of its vise the swamp monster again grabbed a ship and pulled it under. The Graf Spee was sunk with some mystery.



St. Louis skates in Harm's Way, skirting the Massachusetts's triple sterns while "The Bike" tries to corral her for the big ships.

Photo by Trent Thompson

main mast over trying to get into a place that was too short for me. Bayern made it off her five and would live to fight in the next sortie.

Almost everyone was trying to get a little extra charge on their transmitter batteries. We lost a few captains because their transmitters were no longer charged. This might have helped the battle go faster as no one wanted to be on the water too long.

The beginning of the second sortie was all about getting the Bayern. Again the Warspite, VDT and I-boat backed in and sidemounted Brian's poor Dreadnaught. She was not able to take anymore damage, even with the mighty Pearce pump 83 belows was too much, she sank next to the dock.

No one had noticed the Barham doing lazy circles in the middle of the pond during the heated battle. John's transmitter was very slowly losing power after three battles. The batteries that where

kill.

The I-boat then went out after the Rheinland. She was able to do some damage but did not have enough bbs to put her down. As this battle was going on The Bike (AKA USS Minneapolis) got caught in the dock. Not under the dock but in-between two pieces of wood (2x4s) next to one of the dock post. The bow was wedged in-between them and he could not back out. It reminded me of the Vanguard at NATS this past summer. Warspite

Brian Lamb reports his view of the battle: *I started sortie 1 next to my new fleetmate, the USS Portland. Steve looks at me, smiles and gleefully tosses several rounds of sterns into the Bayern's side. I tell him that I'm on his side and he just smiles at me. Darn allied tendencies. I moved off and spotted Bob's Warspite. We backed down at each other in the classic Haymaker ship style. Woohoo! Finally an engagement! Warspite has had a drive refit though and is able to run*



Ryan Butler's von der Tann tangles with the Warspite

Photo by Trent Thompson

rings around the older Bayern, quickly getting the upper hand. Um...where did all my friends go? John? Paul? Anyone? Oh well. I fight back as best I can and move under the docks towards shallower water. The I-boat comes to join the pounding and I am able to get off a good volley of stern guns into her. Warspite stays away from my haymaker and parks her haymaker under my bow sidemount. Unable to get free, I settle for unloading all my ammo at the surrounding flag ships before calling 5 and sliding under the docks to try and avoid further damage. Bayern pumps herself back to life and makes it off her 5.

While we reload, I discuss my damage with my No Flag fleetmates and they agree to help protect me when the wolves attack in sortie #2. I launch Bayern right as the sortie begins and her pump immediately lights off, but with the ram hole patched, she is easily holding her own. Unfortunately, the Rhineland is having gun issues and moves away from me as the Warspite and I-boat make a beeline for me. John Bruder tells the Barham to come to my aid, but she has other ideas and ignores the transmitter completely, making a run for the far end of the pond. The wolves arrive as I get Bayern to the shallows near the pier. No running. No finesse. The end is already written and I just try to unload my

#### Flag Hit Tally

Warspite	(21-11-1)
Invincible	(33-3-7)
Montcalm	(1-0-0)
Nashville	(4-0-0)
St Louis	(4-0-1)
Scharnhorst	(2-0-3)
VDT	(9-2-9)

#### No Flag Hit Tally

Barham	(5-2-0)
The Bike	(39-8-36 sink)
Lion	(18-0-0)
Portland	(12-0-0)
Graf Spee	(12-0-1 sink)
Bayern	(101-36-83 sink)
Rhineland	(17-4-19).

magazine before Warspite, I-boat and VDT finish me off. With a tall pump stream shooting up into the air and guns still firing, Bayern slips stern first into the cold water, her portside completely shredded by British fire.

At dinner that night we shared our best and worst fives of the day. My favorite was Tom Palmer's best five "Not being anyone else's best five." Back at the hotel we watched the first game of the World Series and patched up ships. This was an early boat evening for us as we got to bed around 10pm.

Sunday morning saw us lose the Texas group to their 11 hour drive home. We handed out the awards and said some goodbyes then headed back to the pond. We were a little too loud in the room and outside of it. A really old man next door started pounding on the window telling us to quiet down. It would not have been nearly as funny if he would have had more on then his underwear.

We rearranged the fleets again and ended up with Flag Warspite, Lion, I-boat, The Bike, Montcalm and St Louis versus No Flag Barham, Massachusetts, VDT, Scharnhorst, Nashville and Graf Spee. Before the battle Steve Reynolds came up to me and said he wanted to shoot up the Scharnhorst. I told him I would keep the wolves off him while he worked on his target. Peter had the wader duty and was putting ships in when he learned another lesson. Don't start a battle in the middle of the enemy fleet. The I-boat was able to get close to the big ship and get a lot of good hits on him. Meanwhile I was fighting three ships and taking a lot of bbs. Things were starting to look bad for me. At least the Big Mammie and Barham were pumping too. The Scharnhorst sank and Steve was happy to have sunk a ship by himself for the first time. No one else really shot at the Scharny so Steve gets full credit for the sink.

In the next sortie I was the main target. I picked a spot next to the

right dock. The Big Mammie was very aggressive and was doing a lot of pushing around. He backed over my stern one time and almost sank me. About a minute later he did it again. This time he was completely over the stern deck and the ship could not recover. After Peter pulled out the Warspite and dumped out the water the fight was back on. The Montcalm and Lion were able to back in and light up the Big Mammie while he was busy sidemounting me. I managed to get all of my bow sidemount into the VDT and all of my stern guns into the Big Mammie before I sank. The I-boat started to chase the VDT and put him under next to the dock. While the hug'n'slug battling was going on by the docks the cruisers and Lion were running around the pond. The Lion was able to pull up to the Nashville and get some sidemounts into him. Tom finally got a little test of his pump. Barham and Lion also traded sidemounts and the Lion came away with a quarter size hole above the water line. After the battle we packed up and said our goodbyes. No one counted their ships after the battle. I'm sure the other fleet took a lot more damage then our fleet. This was the end to another wonderful event. The only thing that could have made it better was more captains and maybe a little warmer weather.

For those of you really into the numbers the total score was 904-139-311 for a hit % of 11.38%. This might be a little high considering how many captains had problems with their regulators freezing. I did not see the Port Polar Bear crew having issue with this.

Awards were: Best of Scale Kevin Hovis Missouri, Class 1-3 Tom Palmer, Class 4 Steve Reynolds, Class 5 Peter Ellison, Class 6 Kevin Hovis, Most Feared Bob Hoernemann.

Thanks to Chris Grossaint, John Bruder, Brian Lamb, Ron Horbul, Peter Ellison and Ryan Butler for their thoughts and editing.





## Simple Water-Tight Box – Part I

by Brian P. Koehler



Ask five captains how to do something in this hobby and you will get five different answers. One of the

joys of this hobby is going around the “pits” looking inside other captains’ ships and seeing how each has done things differently. However, for a new captain, I think the ‘dry box’ is probably the most important and nerve-wracking piece of the ship (it is the part that if it fails, the hobby gets more expensive quick). For my first ship, the Northampton class cruiser USS Chester, I made a very simple water-tight box out of a standard ‘unibody-type’ electrical box available at Lowe’s with threaded electrical connectors from Radio Shack. It was very easy to build (no precision drilling and also no “gooping” of over-sized holes with silicone) and the use of all threaded fittings makes it easy to screw in the connectors water-proof-tight.

I was driven to design this box because the standard “Otter” box (divers box) was a little too wide for my Chester hull and I did not own the band saw needed to cut it down smoothly. After a little looking around I noticed a particular electrical box at the local Lowe’s made from a solid one-piece-no-holes construction (I have also seen them at Home Depot).

This particular electrical box has three particular advantages:

- One piece – no holes or wire access

vents that must be sealed.

- Comes with a thick rubber gasket and rigid lid that screws down tight without any “flexing” in-between the screws (which results in a leaky seal).

- The walls are also rigid enough not to flex when the servos push against the MAV poppet valves screwed into the side. This lack of flex, combined with mounting the metal servo arm very close to the valves, has allowed a rate of fire almost as fast as the solenoid-type set-ups in my other boats.

In Photo 1 you can see the completed box. The receiver (not

drive motors (top right). All these servos are screwed into small stubs of wood I glued in place that hold the servos just off the bottom of the box, allowing most of the main electrical wires to run underneath the servos. The green wire at top is where I clip my antenna lead of the receiver in to attach to the external antenna in the boat.

For making the electrical connections into the box, I have really come to love a particular type of Radio Shack binding post (RS#: 274-661). The advantage of these connectors is that they are very adaptable in how you connect to them (banana plug, split-spade, or straight wire) AND they are very leak resistant! The reason for this is because they are completely external, so no large hole (that could leak) needs to be made into the dry box. Since they are threaded, the best way to install these is to drill a small hole (smaller than the screw-end of the connector) in the dry box and forcibly screw the connector into the

*How does a beginner make his first dry box when he has no precision tools and lives in a town with no dive shop (for buying fancy dive boxes)?*

shown) sits in the open pocket where all the servo cables end. You can see the installed servos that fire the cannons (left servo) and switch on/off the pump (bottom right) and

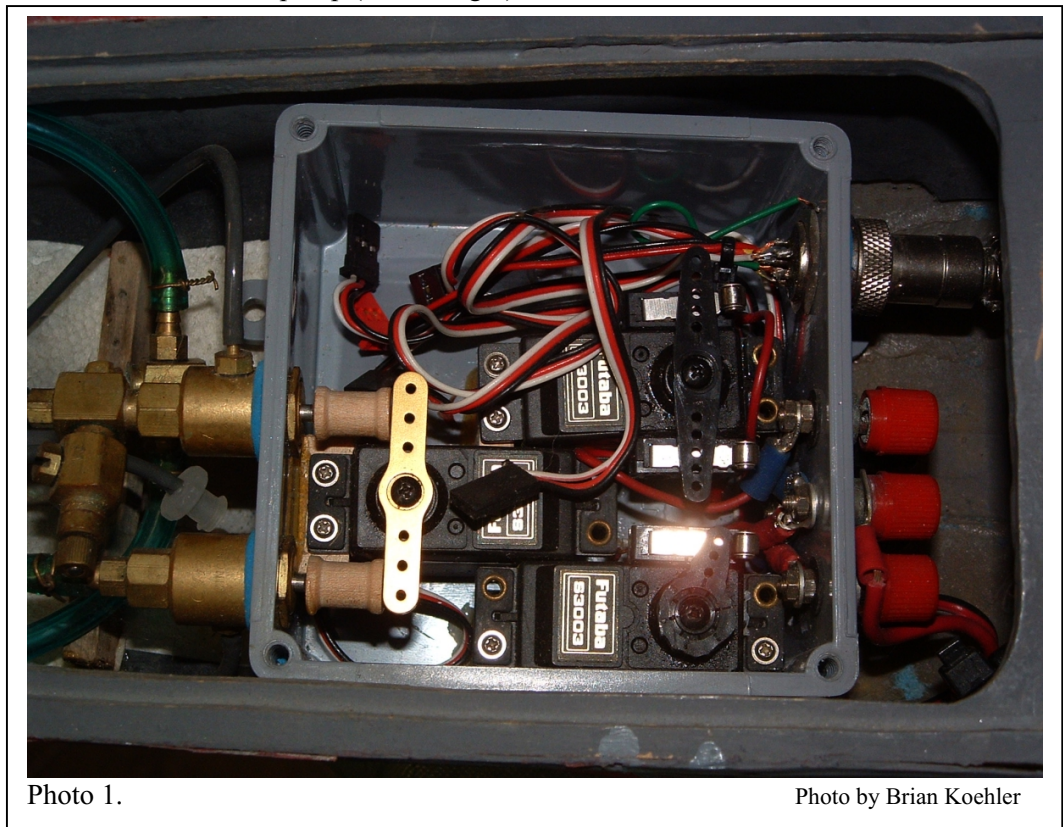


Photo 1.

Photo by Brian Koehler

side. This will effectively self-seal the hole as the connector is forced in. For added protection, a little epoxy can be added around the threads and base of the connector as it is screwed in. The inside wiring is then attached directly to the threads of the connector. I used one pair for the main power in, one pair out for the motors and another pair out to the pump. *Note: these connectors make solenoids setups even easier to install, but that is the topic for a future article...*

I used the connectors in Photo 2 for the main drive and pump power in/out of the dry box. While I could have used a whole series of these connectors along the other side of the box for the servo control wires, I opted to use a surface mount microphone connector to consolidate these smaller lower-current connectors through one opening in the box. To these pins I connected

the external receiver battery, rudder servo extension, and antenna wire. In a similar fashion as above, I also

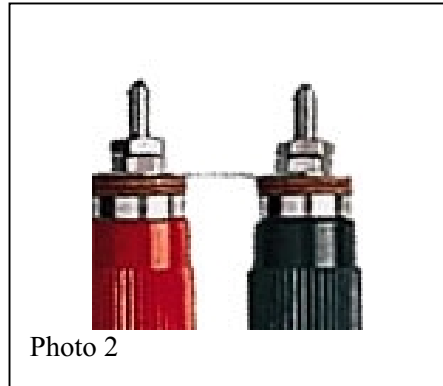


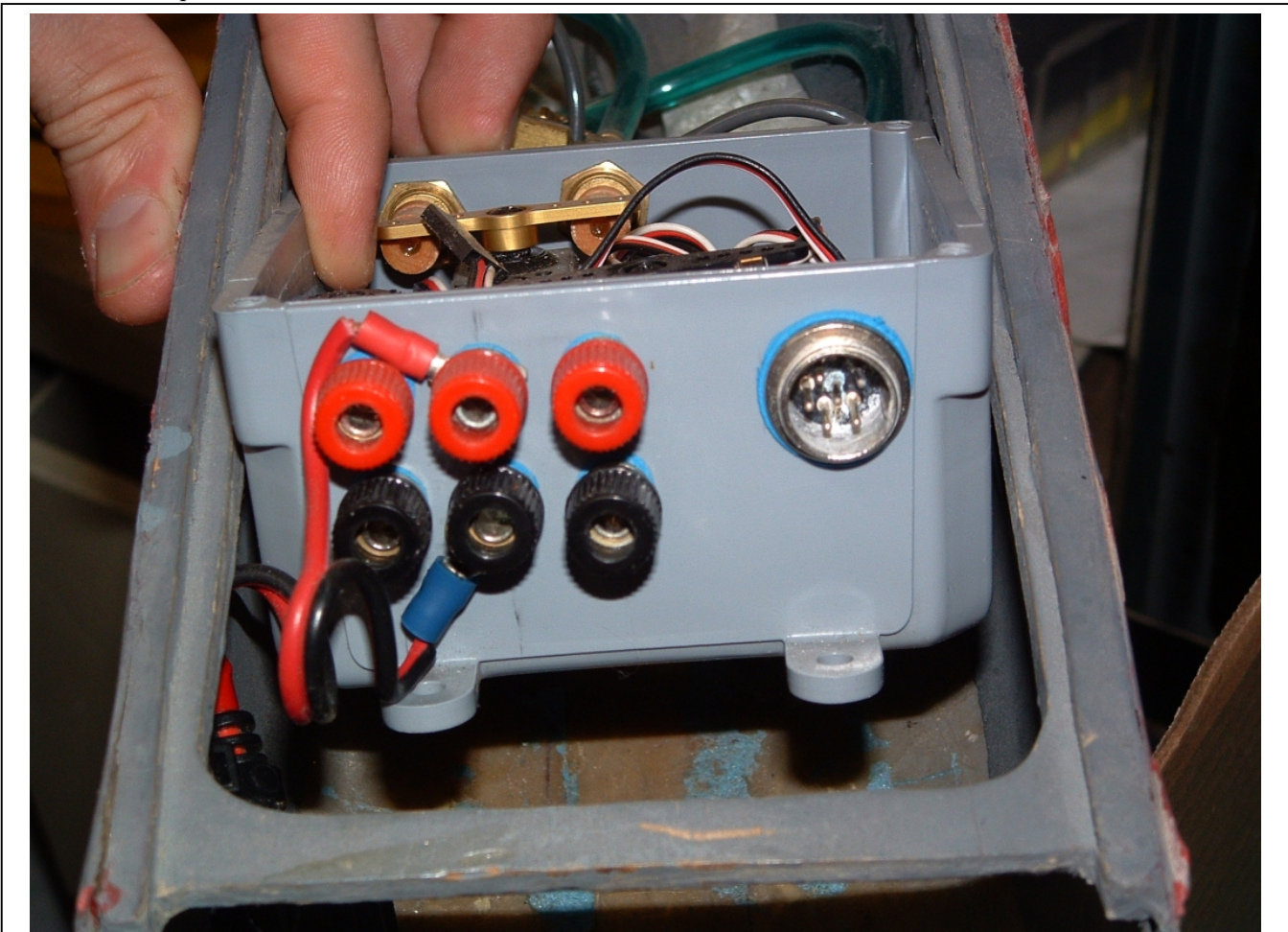
Photo 2

drilled a pair of large holes directly in the sides to mount the MAV actuators for the cannons.

I was not sure the supplied ‘water resistant’ rubber gasket had enough flex to make a good enough ‘water proof’ seal, so I cut a new gasket for the lid from a sheet of ‘hobby foam’ (children’s bathtub foam available in the craft section of

Wal-Mart). I also used a piece to make a gasket for the microphone connector (blue ring around the connector in the photo).

I have used this box many times. It is easy to disconnect and remove from the boat and easy to open. I have not talked about this design much before as being a ‘cautious’ cruiser captain, I have not taken much damage with that ship and was not really sure of its abilities. However, at the Cocoa Beach battle I had the ‘opportunity’ to retrieve the boat several times from fairly deep water (and it had to sit while I changed and swam out to it) and was delighted to see that the box remained completely dry inside. I have to say ‘thanks’ to you Florida Axis guys who helped me ‘test’ this box!



Electrical connectors for watertight box

Photo by B. Koehler



# Simple Water-Tight Box – Part II

by Brian P. Koehler



In my Part I article I described my original dry box built out of a seamless 'uni-body' electrical junction box. After battling with that first ship a while, I became enthralled with the dry boxes other captains made from dive boxes with the clear lids (I loved being able to see inside the box and watch for moisture). Most of the boxes I saw, however, still used a large amount of RTV 'goop' to seal the wires, which I have absolute zero luck with (a skill I just do not have). I decided to try to make a dry box from one of

these boxes but using the 'fool proof' electrical connectors used in my earlier box. My goals for this box were:

- easy to open
- easy to swap out interior components
- modular: very easy and quickly disconnect and move into another boat

The dry box I was able to order was the 'Pelican' brand with the clear lids. These have a rubber water-proof liner all along the bottom that wraps up and forms the seal between the lid and the base. I decide not to make any cuts in the rubber liner (to avoid leaks) and drill my connections

through the lid only.

**Photo 1:** The row of black connectors on the right are for the receiver battery (kept outside the box) and servo connectors. For these I bought a pack of 4" servo extensions. I used the drill bit in my Dremel tool to drill a hole and then dragged the bit downward to make a slot for each connector. I used epoxy to hold each in place and also on the inside around the wires to seal them water-tight. Inside, each connector was plugged into the appropriate channel on the receiver. I use the extra (white) wire on the battery extension slot to connect the antenna (except for the 2.4GHz receiver,

whose antennas are small enough to fit inside).

The red and black electrical connectors on the top are the 6-volt lines for

*Can a dry box be relatively easy to make, easy to get into, and still be reliable?*

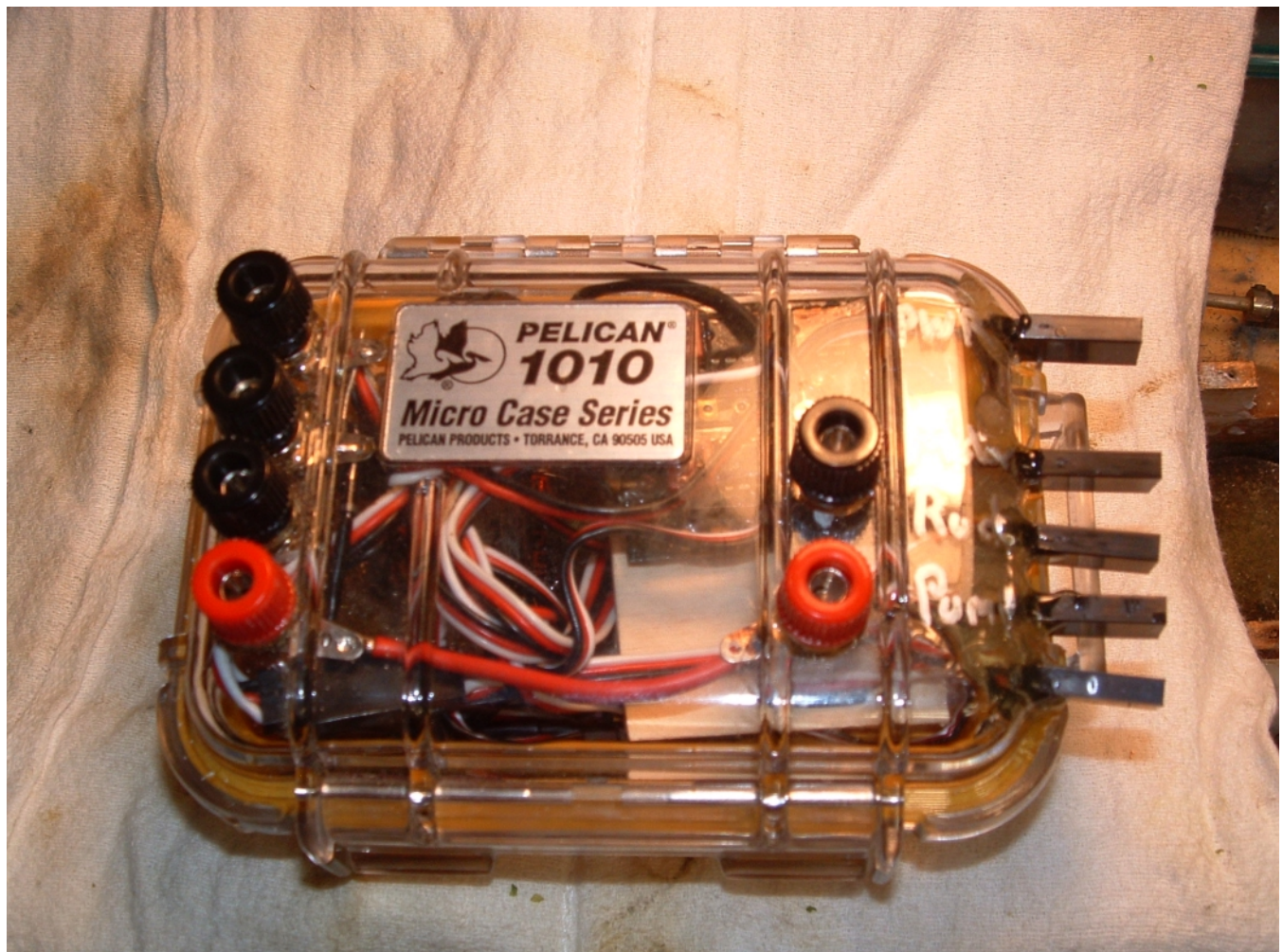


Photo 1

Photo by Brian Koehler



the Team Delta solenoid cards. I do really love these connectors. Just drill a tiny pilot hole and force-thread them in. They really CANNOT LEAK! The battery is connected on the outside to the two terminals in the right side of the lid. You can see that the red (+) just passes through under the lid and back to the red connector on the left (reason for that in a moment). The black (-) is connected to the Team Delta cards, and each card then routes back to a black connector on the left side of the lid. The wires from the solenoids are connected to the red connector at left (shared) and then to one of the black connectors. Under the left connectors (just visible in the Photo 2 inside the lid at left) a diode is permanently soldered in place between each black connector and the red connector. This is the diode that eliminates surges caused by the solenoids from damaging the Team Delta cards. *Note: Because they are permanently in place I do not have to change them when I remove a faulty solenoid (or pre-wire diodes to each back-up solenoid). I just disconnect the wires of the bad solenoid and push the wires of the new solenoid into place.*

Photo 3 is the inside of the box

just before closing the lid. It looks a little jumbled, but it all fits pretty well. The receiver sits under the extension cables in the space on the left of the box. I use a small drop of silicone to 'tack' down each Team Delta card to a small piece of wood (seen at right) to hold them all neatly together on the other side of the box. It is still very easy to 'pop' them off and swap should one fail. The main power (-) coming down from the lid to the cards are connected to a terminal block mounted upside down underneath the wood. This makes it very easy to quickly remove one card and screw-in a replacement if one ever fails, which has never happened yet. I also push most of the extra servo extension wires underneath the wood to tuck them out of the way as I close the lid. The clear lid also makes it very easy to see the blinking led's of the Team delta cards to check that they are working!

I should note my usual driving

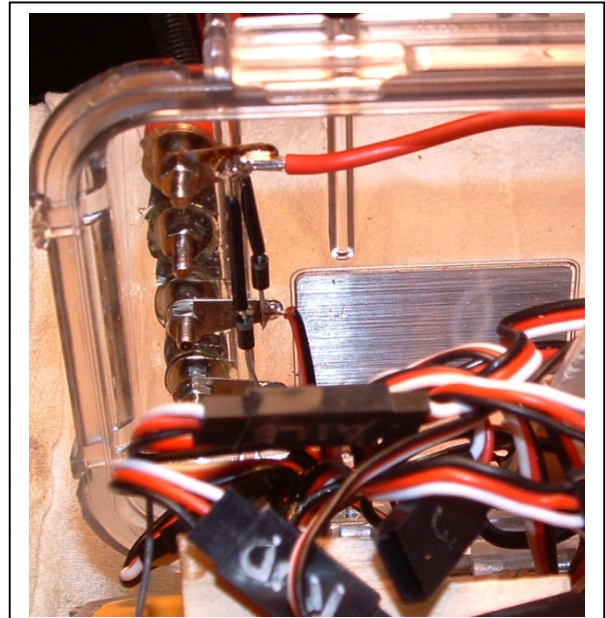


Photo 2

Photo by B. Koehler.

concern: Murphy's Law! As such, I like to have (at least one) extra layer of protection. So even though I use a dry box, I still cote my electronics with SkotchKote before mounting them inside the box. Also, using this design with the Clippard solenoids, where the tubing stays connected to the manifold (base), it is possible to quickly swap those out for repair: remove the two screws holding down the servo, disconnect the two wires from dry box lid, push leads of new solenoid in, and screw down to existing manifold... done in under 30 seconds!

I have used this box in my Vanguard and my son's HMS Lion. I enjoy the fact that, should a disaster happen to one, I can always quickly yank the whole box out of one boat and install it in the other in about a minute. Being the "big target" Vanguard, and also a novice when it comes to maneuvering a battleship, this box has been "tested" (i.e. sunk) quite a number of times by my Axis "friends". I really do not have any fears about using this box or having to leave it under the water for a period of time.

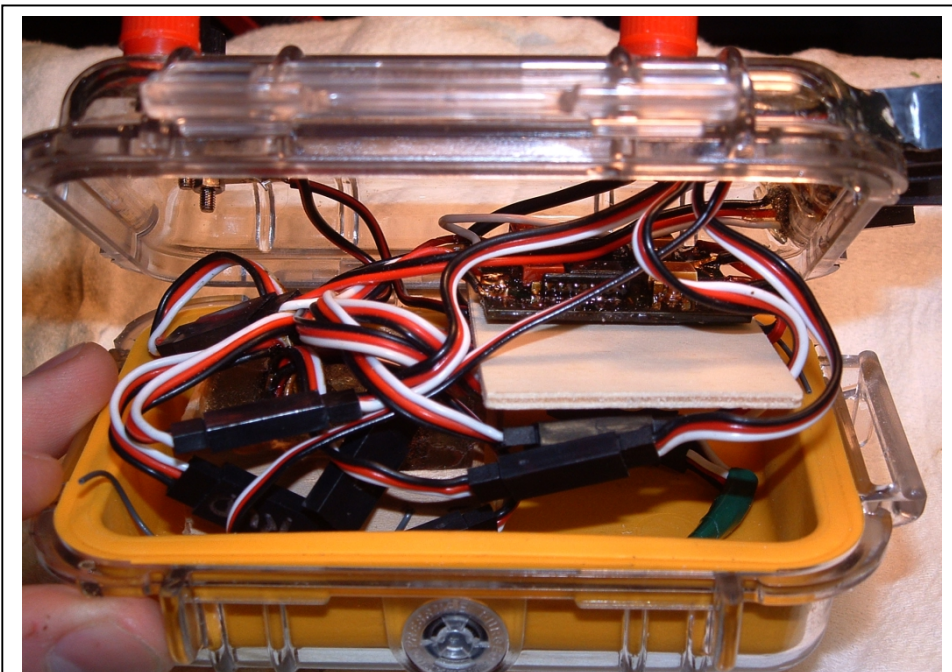


Photo 3

Photo by B. Koehler



# MODEL WARSHIP COMBAT, INC

## 2007 National Competition Entry Form

Each person attending the MWC Nationals MUST be a current member in good standing of the MWC. Applications received before May 15 qualify for the 'Early Bird' prize drawing (applications received after May 15 will be assessed a \$10 'late fee'). **No NATS applications can be accepted after July 1!**

In the space provided below, please list any alternative channels you could move to in order to ease frequency usage. Additional t-shirts and banquet dinner plates are also available.

*(For radio channels, please remember that Allies use even numbered channels and Axis are to use odd.)*

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fleet (circle): Allied Axis Shirt Size (circle): S M L XL XXL XXXL

Primary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Channel: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Channels(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fleet (circle): Allied Axis Shirt Size (circle): S M L XL XXL XXXL

Primary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Channel: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Channels(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fleet (circle): Allied Axis Shirt Size (circle): S M L XL XXL XXXL

Primary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Channel: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Channels(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Entry Fee\*: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (# Primary Captains x \$140)

Please make checks payable to:

Secondary Entry Fee\*: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (# Junior Secondary Captains x \$110)

Model Warship Combat, Inc

Extra T-shirts: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (# shirts x \$15) List Sizes: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Banquets: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25 each guest: Includes tour of USS Texas)

Total Fee Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail check and payment to:

**Brian Lamb**  
**1511 Redway Ln**  
**Houston, TX 77062**

\*includes banquet on the USS Texas and one T-shirt!

Don't forget to also sign-up on the MWCI webpage! ([www.modelwarshipcombat.org/eventlist.shtml](http://www.modelwarshipcombat.org/eventlist.shtml))

## My first Memory with Ships by Peter Kunisch

The History channel is one of my favorites when I work on my ship or other such task. It provides a background of sound and I only need to look at the screen now and then.

It showed a program of 1945 WWII and that reminded me of a chapter of my younger days. My family, Mom, Grandma, Grandpa and brothers had stopped on our long way from home, we were refugees from the Northeast, Schlesien and had taken temporary shelter at my Uncles home in Turingen. The program showed the Russians pouring into Germany at the end of the war and that brought back memories, some good, some not so pleasant.

It was a warm and balmy spring day, steamy after a hard downpour. My brother and I were by the roadside building a dam to hold water; you guessed it, to float our flotilla. Our ships were made of

scrap wood, tree bark, twigs for mast and a steel thumb tack on the bottom for ballast. It was a lot of fun, we got dirty and later got yelled at by Mother but..... no matter. It was a strange fascination with ships even though my home town was nowhere near the coast or any water, a lure that to this day I cannot explain.

It was curiously quiet in town but we paid little attention to that. In the back of my mind I was wondering what happened to the American troops that were in this little village only the night before and then it happened.

On the distant Autobahn we could see and hear the rumbling of tanks, mile after mile of (Russian) tanks rolling west. On the country road where we had our dam and fun a long column of trucks and other vehicles (all Russian) was approaching the Town. The lead vehicle, open like a Jeep, stopped. The man in back stood up and asked us what we were doing.

“We are only playing with our

ships”

In a very gentle voice he told us to go home and stay indoors. Now we could hear our Aunt’s frantic screaming for us to come home. We went home, my Aunt was shaking and we were wondering what the fuss was all about.

Kids are kids and we did not know the difference between American and Russian troops nor did we care as long as we had our ships and water.

Best, Peter

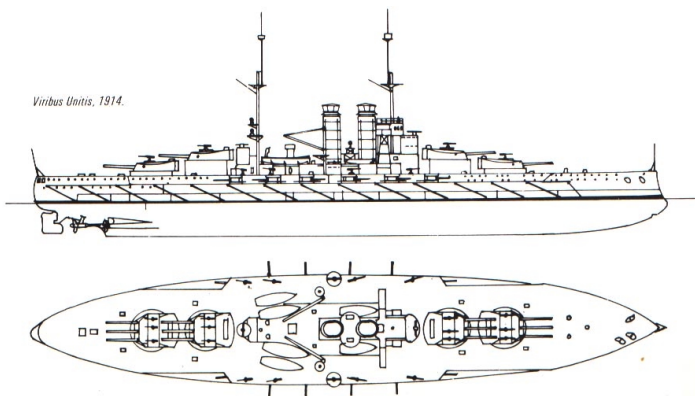
PS: US General Patten’s Army was ordered to pull back and let the Russians have that part of Germany, but I did not know that till many years later.



TF144 Ediot note: Well after a year off I’ve picked up some new procrastination habits that kept this issue from getting out on time. I’ll try to do better with the next one. Thanks to all the authors and photographers that contributed in such short notice for this issue!

### **TASK FORCE 144**

1486 Oakdale Ave.  
West St. Paul, MN 55118



*I never suffer my mind to be so wedded to any opinions as to refuse to listen to better ones when they are suggested to me. – Henry IV (Henry of Navarre), King of France (1553-1610)*