



Australian Battle Group

A Big Gun Fighting Warship R/C Club

American Visitor

American Carl Zoller from Midwest BG who came over on his honeymoon was welcomed by Sydney Battle Squadron. They held a special Combat meeting on Sunday the 6th October where Carl was presented with a shirt, badge and CDs. Not only does he seem a nice guy but he proved that he is a most experienced skipper when, using a borrowed Alabama from Richard Simpson, he proceeded to clean up the Axis. Carl has 7 ships back home and travels 400 miles to battle. How is that for being keen! My Strasbourg was sunk once and beached sinking twice. David Howard (Richelieu) and Brian Evans (Jean Bart) attacked the Allies but we were badly thrashed by the combined Lion, Alabama and SoDak. Ashley Head did very well in his first battle with his borrowed SoDak, also loaned from Richard Simpson. While the battling was savage, we did have time to chat to Carl.

It was well worth the trip from Canberra and Michael Raue travelled from Armidale to battle his newly detailed Lion and meet Carl. We were reacquainted with Richard Lane, one of the original instigators of the hobby, now back in Sydney and he has purchased Glendon Pryor's Littorio. He battled all day, keeping it going and on the water, not bad for his first battle. Our thanks to the excellent meeting and BBQ provided by Sydney BS. Carl is another good contact we now have in the US and there is some chance he will get back for the 5th Nationals/AGM in January. He said he would be willing to transport a couple of his ships over for that battle.



Left: American Carl Zoller from the Midwest BG Indiana, on the left, with Brian Evans, CanBG at the Sydney Battle. Carl proved a top skipper, who sank the Strasbourg 3 times (and with a borrowed Alabama). He was also responsible for other sinkings. Richard Lane, Sydney BS, did well with his Littorio at his first battle.

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T.O.N.E. Battle Squadron, Armidale – NSW

TONE shipyards has launched a new hull of the 30,000 tonne troopship, SS Manhattan/Washington, at 22 knot s . Also off the slips is a 29,000 tonne George/Britannic 2 again with a 22 knot speed.

Armidale now has a Fort Drum, a concrete battleship, really a Coastal Battery in Manila Harbour in the Philippines. This has 2 x 14" guns and secondaries are 2 x 6" guns. The HMS Lion has been detailed extensively and was a sight at Sydney but she took some damage which will have to be repaired.

Destroyed Cruiser

We received a Newsletter from the Western Warship Combat Club in California, USA. It details Dave Seibel's Italian Cruiser *Giussano* being hit and exploding, sending debris 3m to 4m into the air. Seems it was not a hit on the accumulator, but the regulator which was faulty. The ship was recovered with its bow practically blown off, the spectators all agreeing it was the best they had seen so far. What we modellers have to do to please the crowd!



Left: The Giussano turns on its side before sinking after exploding spectacularly, putting on a great show for the crowd.



Left: Front view of damage done when the sides and top blew up



Above right: Why is this man laughing? Is it because, a) he got his ship back? b) the internals were overheating and this problem is now solved? c) he damaged another ship near him when he sank or d) it isn't his ship? Will Silkspan fix this?

Model Shows

Brett Farquharson, managed to get to the Newcastle Model Show in August and help out. He said the local guys had everything organised and he had a relaxed time. You can see how our flags dress up the display and attract the eye. Our Safe Firing Range is always a great hit with the crowd and most want to try out the guns. AusBG can also supply the posters.

Right: Glendon Pryor on the left with Owen Foster ready for the crowds at the Newcastle Model Show. People are always fascinated with the hobby, asking over and over, "do they really sink?" They still ask this after seeing the videos and pictures showing ships disappearing under the water. The Newcastle BS makes good use of this Show to recruit new members. Note, American Randy Kehr's donated 48 star US flag hangs proudly with others. This flag is a veteran of WW2.



Building Hints

One of the most frustrating aspects of the hobby is to build a barbette (the casing which supports the gun and turret) which will survive the impact of well-aimed BB's. I have replaced mine so many times that I had to think of something which would last. I needed a barbette for the B turret of the Strasbourg about 10mm high, strong and also flexible enough to be able to take hits without shattering. I finally came up with using a new hacksaw blade, very strong and able to be bent or shaped to fit and glued into place. This was covered with 2 layers of rubber strip. It looks excellent and I will let you know if it survives.

The other item which frustrates Skippers is the turret cover. This is the main reason that there are so many 'naked' ships around. The turret has to be strong, look real and in scale and allow easy removal for reloading the magazine. The main problem was how to attach this to the magazine without a lot of fiddly screws slowing you down. It was necessary to fasten the cover to the magazine without adding new brackets to the clear magazine cover. The one thing which already existed was the feeding tube and I decided to use this. The cover was made of balsa to show the damage from hits and fibreglassed inside to protect the cannon bends and servo. I glued a brass tube to the turret cover to fit inside the feeder tube and this solved the problem. The barrels held it in place horizontally and the turret could be removed vertically very easily. Reloading was a piece of cake and there were no screws or clamps involved, a godsend when you are in a hurry.



Left: The turret uses a rod attached to the top which fits inside the existing magazine filler tube.



Right: Jason Phillips of the CanBG with his new Steiermark transport/raider. A fast German destroyer is next to him. Note the shade cloth barrier erected for protection from BB's.

Eden Model Show - NSW

Our esteemed Secretary, Brett Farquharson heard that the Eden Model Show was cancelled but he was offered a chance to set up in the Whale Museum for that weekend. As the only exhibitor there, he, together with stalwarts Brian Evans and Bob Booth, ran the display over the 2 days. They feel we may have caught 2 more people for the South Coast, time will tell. Well done you guys. Brett is on standby for the upcoming bush fire season and it looks like Brian, Bob and I will handle the Model Show at Tuross Heads on the 16th, 17th November.

Victorian Model Show

The Victorians held their first display at a Model Show and were very pleased at the interest shown by the public. Tony Collins and Noel Brain are working hard to increase membership and are actively checking out sites after several offers. We are all hoping they will settle on the one in the middle of 5 vineyards.

Right: This is a picture of the anti-syphon valve needed in our gas bottles. This allows the gas and NOT the liquid in the bottle to be pumped from the shoulder of the bottle into the accumulator of the cannon. If the liquid gets in, the guns will freeze and the cannon will not fire! There is a new model out which only takes a quarter turn from 'on' to 'off' replacing the full thread model I use.



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SHIP OF THE MONTH



Here we have the Battleship USS Alabama on the right, skippered by Richard Simpson, engaging Noel Brain's Iowa class Battleship, Mike Dundee. Richard has made this ship very reliable and he will always seek and engage no matter what the odds. It has taken so much damage, been repaired so often that this could be regarded as a completely re-built ship.

The South Dakota class ship is wide, short and has twin rudders making it an ideal gun platform. It has a small turning circle, has 9 x 16" guns and does 28 knots. Richard lent Alabama to Carl Zoller, a visitor from the Midwest BG in the USA. An experienced skipper, Carl showed his skills as he went on a Axis witch hunt. The ship performed brilliantly, didn't miss a beat, a real credit to Richard.

Editor's Comment

When the Group was formed, we decide to work on it for 5 years, if it did not succeed, we would not pursue it any further. It is 5 years this November and we have 10 Groups/Squadrons and every State and Territory is represented. Although each group is small in numbers, we are strong in enthusiasm. Look at guys like Richard Simpson, Glendon Pryor, Michael Raue, Richard Single, David Howard and Brian Evans, Noel Brain and Gordon Cranfield. The fact that 5 of the original 8 remain is proof of interest! Are we crazy?



Left: Our good mate Phil Sensibaugh of the Midwest BG in Indiana, USA, presented with Honorary Membership of the AusBG. Phil work so very hard to set us up in this hobby, providing advice, cannons, parts and contacts. He came over to one of our Battles in Nov. 1999 and enjoyed a tour of the War Memorial in Canberra with Brett.



Top Right: View of the skippers attending last years 4th Nationals/AGM at Armidale, NSW, in January 2002.

Bottom Right: The Westralian contingent. Gordon and Elaine Cranfield with Gordon's father George, in the foreground. Gordon is the force pushing the WA effort and he also helps the hobby by making the local CMS cannons now used by our members.



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