

Victory at Sea 2nd Edition

Admiralty Rules



v.1.3

By Sebastian & Tri-State Historical Miniature Gaming

Using this Book

Introduction

First and foremost, this work is not intended to replace the official Victory at Sea rulebook. The core mechanics of the game are good and an excellent foundation to build upon. Victory at Sea, however, is not without its problems.

The purpose of this book is to clarify some of the rules, give examples, and modify (or rewrite) some portions that either don't make sense or don't play well on a game board. Our sincere hope is this unofficial update will gain widespread acceptance in the Victory at Sea community because it'll make the game more fun and easier to understand.

The updates and corrections in the pages below are not official and you should discuss using anything written here beforehand with your opponent.

Color Coding

Undoubtedly, some things still need to be updated. There will be rule changes that make sense in one scenario but not another.

Green Text indicates small but significant additions to the text of official rules as they are written in the rulebook. Usually, it will be one word or sentence.

Purple Text is for rules we're still playtesting and aren't quite sure about yet and may be changed or omitted in future updates.

Blue Text highlights new additions to this rulebook from previous versions.

YouTube Channel

Often the most effective way to explain things is with a demonstration. A lot of the information below, along with explanations and answers to frequently asked questions, will (hopefully) be answered on our YouTube channel.

Link: [The Admiralty](#)

Useful Links

[The Admiralty Rules Official Website](#)

[Official Victory at Sea Forums](#)

[Unofficial Victory at Sea Facebook Group](#)

[Victory at Sea on Reddit](#)

[Unofficial Victory at Sea Discord](#)

Known Issues

Rules Clarifications & Contradictions

Probably the biggest issue with the Victory at Sea rulebook is it has only 22 pages of rules in a rulebook that's 275 pages long. In other words, less than 10% of the book covers how to play the game. That's led to a lot of people turning to places like Facebook and the Warlord forums for clarity. We hope to fix some of that by using illustrations and examples that answer the most common questions.

The Warlord Points System (WLPS)

Unfortunately, the points cost of a lot of ships and planes in the official rulebook aren't consistent and sometimes don't make sense. There's been a lot of speculation about how the cost of ships are calculated, but the consensus is that it's broken in some places.

WLPA (Warlord Points System, Adjusted)

Some dedicated players are working on adjustments to the WLPS, dubbed Warlord Points, Adjusted (WLPA). These points are re-calculated using a different algorithm that should reflect a more accurate points value based on in-game capabilities.

SHIPS

Is a new points system that allows the players to add any ship they want and have it balanced with respect to the other ships already in the game.

You can find the latest edition of SHIPS and WLPA in the unofficial Victory at Sea Facebook group (linked above).

Rules & Definitions

Random Enemy Ship

Some attacks such as the Japanese “Fan Salvoes” or the Italian “10th MAS Flotilla” call for damage against a random ship in the enemy’s fleet. To determine which ship has been hit, make a list or line up all possible targets on the table. If the number of targets is six or less, roll a 1d6 and assign the hit to the corresponding ship. If the number of ships is more than six but less than eleven, roll a 1d10. If the number of ships is greater than ten roll 2d10 with a -1 modifier (since a natural 1 is impossible with two dice). Re-roll any result which doesn’t have a corresponding target ship.

Example One: Player One has a Japanese fleet and uses his Fan Salvo attack before the game begins. He scores on hit on the enemy fleet consisting of six ships. Player Two either lines up or makes an ordered list of his ships. Player One then rolls a 1d6 with a result of 4. The fourth ship on Player Two’s fleet takes the hit and damage dice are rolled.

Example Two: Same as above but Player Two has 15 ships in his fleet. Player One rolls 2d10 which results in a 12, however the score is reduced by 1 so the final result is an 11. The eleventh ship on Player Two’s fleet takes the hit and damage is determined. If the result was a 17 or greater, Player One would re-roll the dice since Player Two only has 15 ships to choose from.

Natural One

Guns jam, controls fail, engines seize... All attempts to hit a target or do damage fail on a 1d6 roll result of a natural 1, regardless of what the score would be after modifiers. This includes naval gunfights, dogfighting, defensive fire, & rolls for damage for weapons with the Devastating trait.

Confirming Critical Hits

All potential critical hits need to be confirmed by rolling a 1d6 and scoring a 4+ as the result. This is just a reminder.

Armored Deck

There has been some debate about armored decks affecting critical hits with Devastating weapons. In these rules any ship with an armored deck has its added protection applied to the Damage Dice roll, and therefore only a natural six can cause a critical hit even when hit by weapons with the Devastating trait.

Torpedo Belt X

The additional protection bonus is applied after the Damage Dice roll, therefore torpedo attacks with the Devastating trait still need a 5 or 6 to score a possible critical hit. This is specifically stated in the official rulebook.

Leapfrogging Ships

In the official rulebook there are no collisions or ramming so ships that overlap wind up on one side or another of each other. This can lead to some ships moving an additional boat length during the movement phase if they are placed on the far side of the ship they overlap with. In these rules players will always place their overlapping ships on the near side of the ship they overlap with.

However, if the overlapping ship intended to move over 6 inches but cannot because it’s on the near side of the ship it’s crossing, that ship still gets the Fast-Moving Target to hit modifier.

Over-Penetration

Historically, the large armor piercing shells from Battleships would often pass clean through lightly armored ships like destroyers and merchantmen without their fuses engaging and their bursting charge detonating. This was one of the key reasons why the destroyers of Taffy 3 were able to take on Japanese battleships and survive for so long during the Battle of Samar. When a battleship attacks a ship with an armor of 1+ or less using its main guns the hit must be confirmed by rolling a 1d6 requiring a result of 5+ for the shell to detonate and cause damage. Otherwise, the shell travels through the target without exploding and does no damage.

Switch to High-Explosive

At the beginning of the game or during the End Phase of any turn a battleship can switch to high explosive shells. This type of ammunition is designed to have a bigger bursting charge at the expense of armor penetration. They also do not suffer the effects of over-penetration (explained above). Battleships using high-explosive ammunition have their AP reduced to -2 but add 1 additional damage dice per turret.

For example, HMS Warspite used HE shells when attacking German destroyers during the 2nd Naval Battle of Narvik, sinking (or causing the scuttling of) all 8 of them.

Traits

DP (Dual Purpose)

Same as in VAS Rulebook but please note all Light Guns including those with the DP trait also have the Fast Track trait and don't suffer the +1 to hit penalty for ships that move more than six inches. This should have been made clearer in the rulebook. This is noted on page 44 as in the Attack Dice Modifiers chart and can go overlooked.

Restricted

Some ships are so large that though they mount many Light Guns, not all can be fired upon the same target. A Restricted weapon may only fire a maximum of half its Attack Dice (rounding up) against targets in the port **and** starboard fire arcs. **Though attack dice is rounded up, a ship may not use more than its total AD.**

Weapons with the Restricted trait only roll two Attack Dice in the fore and aft arcs.

Example: The Italian battleship Vittorio Veneto is between two British destroyers, one to the Port and one to Starboard. Vittorio Veneto has twelve 6-inch Light Guns with 8 Attack

Dice (AD), but they have the Restricted trait, so that becomes 4 Attack Dice on either side. The Italian player can roll 4 dice against the British destroyer on the starboard side, and 4 dice against the one on the port side.

Tough

This Flight is unusually well-armored and can withstand incoming fire. Two hits are needed from a single AA Battery system to destroy it. **Aircraft with the Tough trait count losing dogfights by 1 point as a draw. Defensive Fire from bombers ignores the Tough trait.**

Very Tough

This Flight is exceptionally well armored and can endure a tremendous amount of incoming fire. Three hits are needed from a single AA Battery system to destroy it. **Aircraft with the Very Tough trait count losing dogfights by 1 or 2 points as a draw. Defensive Fire from bombers ignores the Very Tough trait.**

Orders

Evade!

Automatic

Effect: Turning hard at random intervals, the ship tries to throw an attacker off guard, causing weapons to miss simply by not being where it was predicted. The constant turns not only throw off the aim of attacking ships, but of the evading firing solutions as well. **Only Light Guns shooting at Short Range (or less), AA batteries, and Local defense can shoot when an Evade! Order is given. All attacks made by a ship performing the Evade! Order and attacks made against the ship must re-roll hits.**

Additionally, the ship's current Flank Speed is halved (round up) for this turn. Destroyers are particularly good at the Evade! Order, if their current Flank Speed (before being

halved) is greater than 6", enemies retain the Attack Dice penalty for targeting a fast-moving target (see page 44 of main rulebook), regardless of how far they actually moved.

Aircraft carriers may not launch or recover aircraft while performing an Evade! Order.

Scramble!

Crew Quality Check

Effect: With utter precision born from months of hard training, the deck crew work to turn around launching or landing aircraft in rapid succession. The carrier may launch or recover one **additional** flight in this turn.

Aircraft Carriers

Reclassifying Carriers

The Victory at Sea rulebook makes no distinction between small, slow escort carriers and large, fast fleet carriers. This is unfortunate because the capabilities of the different types of carriers were like comparing destroyers to battleships. To correct this, throughout these rules carriers will be divided into three distinct categories.

Fleet Carrier (CV)

Either purpose built from the keel up or converted from battleships or battlecruisers, fleet carriers were fast and reasonably protected, and had large air wings.

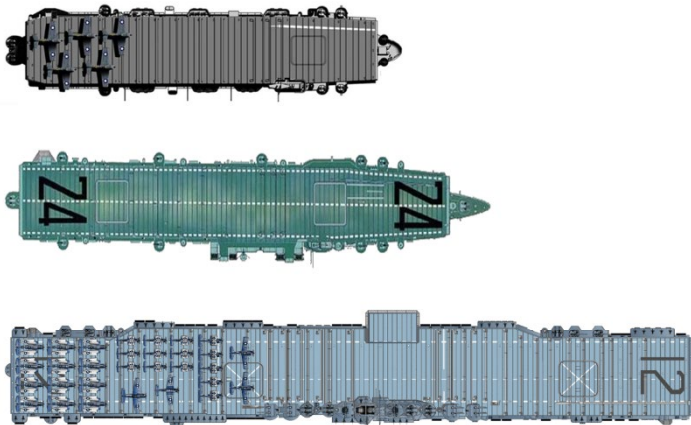
Light Carrier (CVL)

Usually converted from cruiser hulls, these ships had light armor, small air wings, but were fast enough to keep up with the fleet.

Escort Carrier (CVE)

Mostly converted from the hulls of merchant ships, these carriers were slow, lightly armed, and had no armor. Escort carriers were designed to stay with the convoy and have very limited capability to coordinate long range strikes. Consequently, escort Carriers cannot operate in Deep Deployment.

A complete list of carriers and their reclassification can be found near the end of this document in the **Aircraft Carrier Reclassification List** near the back of this document.



Above: a size comparison between a US Navy escort carrier (top), a light carrier (middle), and a fleet carrier (bottom)

Pre-Game – Deployment Strategies

Regular Deployment

Historically, if the commander of an aircraft carrier was able to see enemy warships from its own bridge something had gone horribly wrong. It happened on several occasions during the war, but always ended badly for the carrier and its crew. HMS Glorious was caught unaware by the German battlecruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau partly because no combat air patrol was aloft. The carrier and her two escorting destroyers were sunk with only 40 survivors with nearly 1520 men lost.

Carriers can deploy on the table regularly like other ships, perhaps as the conditions of a scenario, due to a lack of scouting points, or as a general strategy by the player.

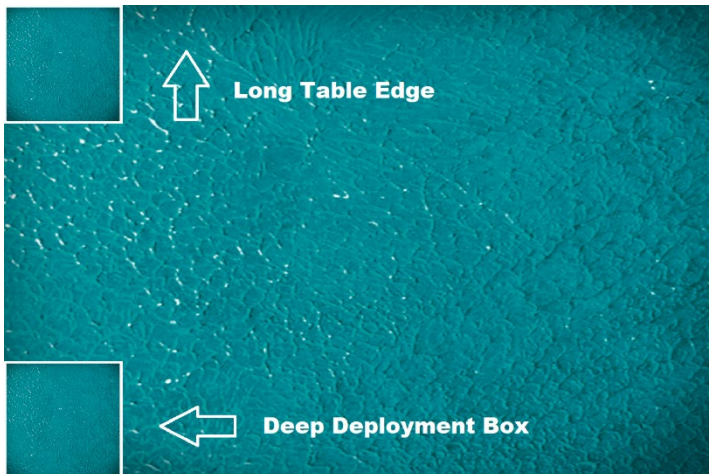
Example: Player One has a Japanese fleet which includes the aircraft carrier Shokaku. He elects to deploy his carrier in regular deployment in the hopes that by having the carrier moving around the table he will be able to land, re-arm, and launch aircraft at a faster pace than his opponent who has his carrier in Deep Deployment. On one hand he is exposing the Shokaku to the possibility of enemy gunfire and torpedo attack, but its aircraft will have a shorter distance to fly to strike from and return to the carrier.

Deep Deployment

In most battles a carrier will want to be well away from the fighting, which Victory at Sea refers to as Deep Deployment (page 53 of the VAS Rulebook). The official rules for Deep Deployment are unchanged yet expanded upon below.

Both players should agree on a corner of the table opposite each other to be reserved to deploy Deep Deployment ships. This deployment zone should be 12" x 12" in size and will represent a portion of the battlefield far behind the regular fleet deployment area. Players will deploy their carriers, combat air patrol (CAP), and escorts in this box. The ships are assumed to be in motion and sailing into the wind but will not physically move inside the box other than to rotate their facing or change formation. Consider this box to be an entirely separate battlefield that can only be entered by aircraft which fly to the longways table edge of the fleet's deployment zone or exited by aircraft which fly to the border of the box and then appear in the deployment zone the next turn.

Example: Player Two has an American fleet which includes the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise. He put the carrier in Deep Deployment which keeps it away from gun and torpedo attack. However, being so far away means his aircraft will have further to travel to re-arm. Aside from aircraft which begin the game in regular deployment, planes launched from USS Enterprise must launch and form up in the Deep Deployment box (see below for details about what happens next).



Above: An example of a game map with Deep Deployment boxes in the upper left and lower left corners.

The Deep Deployment Box can be off the gaming table entirely if table space is unavailable or if it conflicts with scenario conditions. A blue square mouse pad (12 x 12) makes an excellent substitute.

Combat Air Patrol

Same as in the official rulebook which states: "Fleets with carriers often had a combat air patrol (known as a CAP) flying perimeter around the fleet, looking for enemies. Unless the scenario you are playing states differently, you may start the game with two Flights in the air from each carrier in your fleet. These Flights may be placed anywhere in your deployment zone or moved on to the table with your ships in the first turn, as appropriate."

CAP can only be performed by Fighters or Fighter Bombers (without their ordnance). Additionally, if the aircraft carrier is in Deep Deployment, one CAP flight must stay behind to protect the carrier. If multiple carriers are in the fleet, one flight from each carrier must stay in Deep Deployment to provide air cover.

Wind Direction

For the sake of simplicity, wind direction will not be a factor but if players wish to add this level of detail the relevant rules on page 52 of the official VAS rulebook.

Launching & Recovering Aircraft

The rules apply as written in the official rulebook on page 52 with the following changes: Ships with the Carrier Trait may launch or recover flights based on the type of aircraft carrier. Refer to the table below.

Fleet Carrier	4 Flights
Light Carrier	2 Flights
Escort Carrier	1 Flight

Aircraft carriers must move at their maximum speed and in one direction to launch or recover aircraft. An aircraft carrier may launch OR recover aircraft in a turn, but not both!

Exiting Deep Deployment

Aircraft launched from a carrier during the movement phase have their flight stands placed in front of the ship just like in the official rules. However, to leave the Deep Deployment area and join the fight they must move to the edge of the box. On the next turn at the beginning of the Movement Phase they will arrive anywhere along the long table edge of the player's deployment zone and may move that turn at half their Flank Speed, rounding down.

Enemy aircraft which have performed a strike and are now trying to leave the Deep Deployment box follow the same rules. They fly to the edge of the box and re-appear on the game board next turn in the Movement Phase (see below for more information about Attacking Deep Deployment Carriers).

Entering Deep Deployment

To get into the Deep Deployment box, whether to return & re-arm or to strike at an enemy carrier, aircraft need to reach the long table edge of the deployment zone for the fleet which the carrier belongs. Once there, these aircraft are considered to have left the battlefield and made the long flight to the carrier's location. They re-appear on the edge of the Deep Deployment box the following turn during the beginning of the Movement Phase and may move that turn at half their Flank Speed, rounding down.

Attacking Deep Deployment Carriers

When enemy flights reach the opposing player's long table edge in the Movement Phase, they cannot be attacked by anti-aircraft guns or fighters that turn. However, they can be intercepted by CAP fighters once they reach the Deep Deployment box in the following turn. Enemy aircraft cannot move that turn until the defending CAP fighters have performed their intercepts.

Combat Air Patrol – Deep Deployment Interceptions

Fighters flying Combat Air Patrol (CAP) form a defensive perimeter around (but many miles away) from the carrier to intercept incoming enemy aircraft. They are the first line of defense, usually protecting their only means of landing safely and not having the ditch in the sea. That being said, CAP fighters generally will not pursue enemy strike aircraft as they enter anti-aircraft range of the fleet since there is no time to identify friend or foe.

CAP fighters are deployed along the edges of the Deep Deployment box and immediately intercept enemy aircraft as they appear on its perimeter before any other movement is made.

Example: Player One sends a strike force from the carrier Shokaku to attack the USS Enterprise which is in Deep Deployment. All eligible Japanese aircraft are moved to the edge of the box facing inwards. Before anything else happens, the US player gets to move his CAP fighters to intercept the incoming Japanese planes and immediately being dogfighting the intruders (even though it's still the Movement Phase).

Once the dogfights have been resolved, the surviving strike aircraft may begin their attack on targets inside the box. All US CAP fighters remain at the perimeter of the box. The defense of the fleet is in the hands of the anti-aircraft guns now.

The CAP fighters get a second intercept as the strike aircraft move back to the edge of the Deep Deployment box after the attack is over and they return to the Shokaku to re-arm.

Anti-Aircraft Fire

Surviving strike aircraft who have fought their way past the CAP fighters move into base contact with their target.

Refer to the Gunnery Phase – Ships vs. Aircraft in the Aircraft section below for how to resolve anti-aircraft fire.

The Strike Aircraft Attack

They've flown across the game table and reached the edge, entered the Deep Deployment box and fought past the CAP fighters, and have survived the barrage of anti-aircraft fire. Finally, it's time to strike!

Refer to the Gunnery Phase – Aircraft vs. Ships in the Aircraft section below for how to resolve anti-aircraft fire.

Mission Complete, Return to the Carrier

The enemy carrier has been hit and it's time to leave the enemy's Deep Deployment zone and return to the carrier to re-fuel and re-arm. The strike aircraft and their fighter escorts move to the edge of the enemy Deep Deployment area. CAP fighters get another chance to make interceptions but both sides are low on fuel and ammunition so escort fighters will not stay around throughout multiple turns to fight it out. On the next turn the attacking aircraft return to anywhere along the enemy's long table edge. They begin the journey back to their own carrier.

The End Phase

Refueling & Re-arming

Same as the official rulebook (page 53) however to be clear, a plane can be re-armed and launched the very next turn after it has landed if a Crew Quality check is passed during the End Phase of the previous turn.

In addition, players may re-roll their first failed Crew Quality check to re-arm aircraft. If a player is attempting to re-arm only one aircraft that turn, no Crew Quality check is needed.

Switching Ordnance

Many aircraft can carry different kinds of weapons. Most torpedo bombers and fighters could also carry bombs and some bombers could also carry torpedoes. Consult the appropriate national aircraft chart to see what other weapons a flight can equip by looking in the Roles column. If a flight lands on an aircraft carrier it may switch from one role to another during refueling and re-arming.

Example: The British Fairey Barracuda II can be equipped as a dive-bomber, torpedo bomber, or ASW bomber. After expending its original ordnance, it lands on the carrier Ark Royal to re-fuel and re-arm. The British player declares the flight of Barracudas will re-arm from torpedoes to bombs and makes the required Crew Quality check. If successful, the flight of Barracudas is now armed and ready as dive-bombers.

Bombers must start the game with their original ordnance and can only switch after the game has begun. If players are using the SHIPS points system, they must purchase the more expensive variant of that aircraft to be able switch ordnance.

Aircraft

Pre-Game – Force Building

Balanced Carrier Air Groups

Aircraft carriers are first and foremost a ship designed to seek out and destroy the enemy at long range, but they must also be able to protect themselves from an enemy air attack. Finding the right combination of fighters, torpedo bombers, and dive bombers was very important, especially for the big fleet carriers. Each nation had different considerations when it came to which types and models of aircraft to embark and in what numbers, and this evolved as lessons were learned in battle.

For example, the USS Enterprise started the war with an air group consisting of 25% F4F Wildcat fighters, 25% TBD Devastator torpedo bombers, 25% SBD Dauntless dive bombers, and 25% SBD Dauntless scout bombers (which were the same but carried a lighter payload to give them longer range). By 1943 those percentages had changed to 43% fighters, 18% torpedo bombers, and 39% dive bombers (the scout bomber was done away at this point).



The aircraft carrier Enterprise in 1945.

Historically, no carrier from any nation larger than a small escort carrier (which were designed for defense and ferrying replacement aircraft) embarked fighters as the bulk of its air group.

Carriers may carry a maximum number of fighters and fighter-bomber flights equal to half (rounded up) of the carrier's total number of flights. Escort carriers, however, are the exception. Any carrier with a maximum capacity of 4 flights or less may have an air group composed entirely of fighters and fighter bombers.

Example: The Japanese aircraft carrier Kaga can carry 18 flights of aircraft, but only half of these may be fighters, capping the total number of fighters the Kaga can carry at 9.

Example: The American light carrier Independence can carry 7 flights of aircraft, and half of these (rounding up) may be fighters, for a maximum of four.

Example: The British escort carrier Activity can carry 3 flights of aircraft and all three of those flights may be fighters or fighter-bombers.

Note: The planned Italian carrier Aquila can carry a full complement of 12 fighters and fighter-bombers as only one type of aircraft – the Re.2001 Falco II – could operate from an aircraft carrier. Italian players must start the game with at least half of their carrier aircraft in the fighter-bomber role.

Aircraft Commissioned Year & Carrier Refits

All aircraft in the national aircraft charts have a column titled Commissioned with the year the aircraft entered service with the respective fleet. Players must refit their carriers, if available, to a year which most closely matches the year in which their chosen flights became available.

Example: An American player wants to equip the aircraft carrier Wasp with SBD-2 Dauntless dive-bombers (1941), F4F-3 Wildcat fighters (1941), and TBF-1C Avenger torpedo bombers (1942). The Wasp, which was launched in 1940, has an optional 1942 refit for +35 points. To take the Avenger torpedo bombers, the American player must refit the Wasp to its 1942 configuration.

Pre-Deployment – Scouting

Long Range Reconnaissance Aircraft

Players can spend points on several varieties of long-range reconnaissance aircraft as they would fighters, bombers, etc. These large, specialized aircraft were designed to be the eyes of the fleet and were vital for locating enemy ships. On average they could fly much further, had more crew to focus on searching for targets, and were more comfortable than the smaller floatplanes launched from cruisers & battleships in the fleet. Their influence, though less glamorous than the fighters and bombers, cannot be understated.

Every plane purchased acts as an additional Observation Flight during the Scouting step in the Deployment phase and cannot be used to guide Beyond the Horizon Attacks. Unless

otherwise noted in a scenario, these aircraft never actually appear on the gaming table and do not need to be modelled. They are part of your fleet but far away from the action scouting for the enemy force. After the Scouting step in the Deployment phase is complete these aircraft are considered to have returned to base and have no more effect on the game.

Because they are specialized aircraft designed for this role and fly high above the ocean, they are infinitely better at searching for enemy ships than even the fastest most advanced radar equipped ship. Long-range reconnaissance aircraft with a point cost of 5 adds a +1 to the scouting dice roll and can re-roll their dice (the same as ships with Radar). Those which cost 10 points add +2 to the scouting dice roll and can re-roll their dice (as with ships equipped with Advanced Radar).

Players can add the aircraft listed below to their fleets.

Nation	Aircraft	Points
Great Britain	Supermarine "Walrus"	5
	Short "Sunderland"	10
United States	Marine PBM "Mariner"	5
	Consolidated PBY "Catalina"	10
France	Loire 130M	5
	CAMS 55/10	10
German	B&V Bv-138 "Sea Dragon"	5
	Focke-Wulf Fw-200 "Condor"	10
Japan	Kawanishi H6K "Mavis"	5
	Kawanishi H8K1 "Emily"	10
Italy	CANT Z.501 "Gull"	5
	CANT Z.506 "Heron"	10

Example: In the Deployment Phase an American player uses his long-range reconnaissance aircraft for Scouting and five PBY "Catalina" flying boats are deployed. For each a 1d6 is rolled to see if their scouting mission was successful. The US player scores 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Because these are Catalinas and perform like ships with Advanced Radar (regarding Scouting), the modified results are 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The first two results still don't meet the minimum roll for a successful scouting mission (5+) and are re-rolled resulting in a 1 and 3, modified to a 3 and 5 respectively. In total, 4 of 5 American PBY Catalinas performed successful scouting missions, giving the US player 4 scouting points.

Long-range reconnaissance aircraft do not replace catapult launched floatplanes or ships used for scouting as in the official VAS rulebook, and players may still use both for additional scouting points. They are, however, a cheaper and more effective (and historically accurate) way to go about scouting for your fleet.

Like most other flights, Long Range Reconnaissance Aircraft cannot be used in bad weather or at night.

Observation Flights – Gunfire Spotting

Battleships and cruisers may launch observation flights to assist in shooting with their main guns at long and extreme range at other battleships, cruisers, and aircraft carriers. This was done, historically, by an observation aircraft loitering near a target, observing the fall of shot, and reporting back to the ship with results and corrections.

Unlike radar, which couldn't tell the difference between shell splashes from one ship or another, pilots were able to determine which ship was shooting because many ships had colored dye packs in their ammunition. Huge colored geysers of blue, red, orange, etc. seawater would spout up all around the target ship.

For instance, the Japanese Navy used dye to spot the fall of shot of their Kongo class battleships: Kirishima (blue), Kongo (red), Hiei (black). Haruna did not use dye shells and her shell splashes were therefore white. The French battleships Jean Bart and Richelieu had orange and yellow dye caps added to her 380mm shells respectively. The British and Italian navies also used dye caps for their medium and heavy naval guns. The Americans also used dye in their shells, and it was the green dye found on the battered USS Atlanta which confirmed she was hit by USS San Francisco in the confused night fighting around Guadalcanal. Atlanta was scuttled by her crew the next day.

An observation flight must pass a Crew Quality check, must be within 15 inches of the target ship, and must not be in a dogfight to perform **Gunfire Spotting**. If those conditions are met, the attacking ship may re-roll one Attack Dice when attacking that target at long and extreme ranges. One observation flight can be used per ship per turn and only against one target. There is no limit to the number of observation flights from different ships which can be used against a target.

Example: Player One has a Japanese fleet which includes the battleship Kongo is playing against an American fleet with the battleship USS South Dakota. The Kongo has launched one of its three floatplanes during Deployment to act as an observation flight for its main guns (A, B, X, and Y Turrets). The floatplane, a Nakajima E8N "Dave", gets within 15 inches of the American battleship during the Movement Phase.

During the Gunnery Phase when the Kongo is activated the Japanese player rolls a 1d6 for a Crew Quality test to ensure the observation flight is ready to spot and is successful. The Kongo, shooting at the South Dakota at long range, can re-roll one attack dice this turn.

Crippled ships and ships with the vital damage "Bridge Destroyed" cannot use observation floatplanes for gunfire spotting.



Above: A Nakajima E8N "Dave" Observation Floatplane

Battleships and cruisers start the game with all their aircraft aloft either for Scouting or for Gunfire Spotting. Historically, ships launched or stored their aircraft before a battle since no one wants a fragile and very combustible aircraft sitting exposed on the deck. The Americans learned this lesson the hard way in the waters around Guadalcanal.

All observation flights are single engine aircraft with a Flank Speed of 18" and Dogfight modifier of -1.

All have the Role: **Catapult Launched Floatplanes** with no Damage Dice, no Traits, and no Points. They are included with the cost of their ship and may only be carried by ships with the Aircraft trait followed by the number embarked.

Common shipborne observation aircraft are listed below.

Country	Name	Year
Great Britain	Supermarine "Walrus"	1935
Great Britain	Fairey "Swordfish"	1936
United States	Curtiss SOC "Seagull"	1935
United States	Vought OS2U "Kingfisher"	1940
France	Loire 130	1937
Germany	Arado Ar-196	1938
Japan	Nakajima E8N "Dave"	1935
Japan	Aichi E13A "Jake"	1941
Japan	Mitsubishi F1M "Pete"	1941
Italy	IMAM Ro.43	1935
Italy	Reggiane Re-2000 "Falco"	1943

Movement Phase – Aircraft

Alternating Movement

Aircraft are activated in the Movement Phase after all ships have completed their movement. The player with the initiative determines who moves first that round, and both players take turns moving individual flights of any aircraft except fighters, unless those fighters are going to be used to strafe enemy ships. Fighters move after all other aircraft

types are finished and then begin their own phase of alternating movement.

Example: Player One has won the initiative and decides if player two will move first. Player Two selects one flight or formation (see below) of Japanese G4M "Betty" bombers and moves it to the desired location on the table. Player One does the same with a flight of SBD "Dauntless" dive bombers, and so forth until all aircraft except fighters have moved. The process repeats itself until all aircraft have been moved.

Player One then decides who moves the first flight of fighters. He selects a stand of F4F "Wildcats" and moves them into base-to-base contact with a stand of enemy bombers, and so on.

Bomber Formations

The best way to ensure survival is to stick together and work as a team. Bombers may group themselves into a formation consisting of 2 – 3 flights in base-to-base contact and move as one unit. The formation only moves as fast as its slowest aircraft. This formation of bombers essentially becomes one large flight and any base-to-base contact made against one stand in the group is treated as contact made against all flights in the formation. Conversely, as long as the furthest stand is within range, any target the formation makes base-to-base contact with is considered in base contact with all flights in the formation.

Flights of fighters can be added to and moved with the formation but only as escorts and cannot initiate their own dogfights against any enemy fighters except those attacking that formation.



Above: US torpedo bombers flying in formation.

Formations must consist of the same types of aircraft – dive bombers, level bombers, torpedo bombers, etc. There is no advantage (or sense) in having low flying and slow torpedo bombers mixed in with faster high-flying dive-bombers or lumbering level bombers.

Example: Player One selects three flights of SBD “Dauntless” dive-bombers and groups them together along with a flight of F4F “Wildcats” acting as escort. These three stands of dive-bombers move together as one unit maintaining base-to-base contact with each other. The escorting flight of fighters also moves with the formation and must be in base-to-base contact with two of the flights of bombers. This not only ensures his aircraft are better protected and a more potent strike force, but also makes movement quicker and easier.

Even though a formation of bombers works together on attack and defense (see the Defensive Fire! entry below), they are destroyed in individual parts. When a formation is successfully shot down, remove one flight of bombers from the formation. Repeat as needed until only one flight (or no flights) are left.

Alternatively, to reduce the amount of aircraft “clutter” on the game board, a Bomber Formation can be represented by one flight stand if the number of flights in the formation is clearly marked in a way agreed upon by both players.

Flights of bombers can leave the bomber formation at any time during the Movement Phase.

High Altitude Bombers

Some bombers are simply not designed to attack at sea level, or to glide bomb at a shallow angle, or come screaming down from high above like a dive-bomber. Any bomber may choose to stay at high altitude and drop their bombs from tens of thousands of feet above the target. The benefit is immunity from AA Battery fire (though not from Light Guns with the DP trait) however it's extremely difficult to hit a moving target from such a height.

Attacks by high-altitude bombers require a 1d6 result of a natural 6, and a re-roll of a 5+ to hit. If the target moved more than six inches in the Movement Phase the re-roll becomes a 6 to hit. If the ship has not moved at all this turn a hit is scored on a re-roll of 4 or better.

Example: A flight of B5N “Kate” bombers stays at high altitude and drops their bombs on the USS Arizona moored below. The ship is at anchor and not moving, and one bomb penetrates its deck and detonates the magazine. It's an unlikely hit, but it happened that way.



Above: A Nakajima B5N “Kate” bomber. Although most well known as a torpedo bomber, the Kate could carry a heavy payload of 1760 lbs. of bombs instead. Commander Mitsuo Fuchida lead the Pearl Harbor attack from the cockpit of a Kate.

Tally Ho!

Fighters move once all bomber and observation aircraft movement is complete, starting with the player who has the initiative. Once a flight of fighters has moved into base-to-base contact with a target, the defending player decides if his flight will dogfight, disengage, or conduct defensive fire. See more about Priority Targets and conducting Defensive Fire! below.

A flight of fighters which moves into contact with an enemy flight of fighters that has not moved starts a dogfight at that location where contact is made. If the enemy player wants to break contact and make their own move the attacking fighters must be evaded. Each player rolls a 1d6 as if they are in a dogfight and adds their Dogfight modifiers to their result. If the attacking player which initiated the fight wins, the defending flight is destroyed. If the defending flight scores highest, neither flight is destroyed, and it may disengage from the dogfight and make its own movement.

Example: Player One moves a flight of British Seafire fighters into base contact with a flight of German Bf-109 fighters that have not moved this turn. The German player wants to use that flight to intercept British bombers and declares the flight of Bf-109s are going to disengage. The British fighters get a chance to shoot down the Germans first, and both players roll a 1d6. The British player rolls a 2 (and adds the Seafire's +3 Dogfight modifier to the result) for a total score of 5. The German player rolls a 4 (adding +2 to the result for the Bf109's Dogfight modifier) for a final score of 6.

The German player can now disengage and make their own movement, including initiating another dogfight with a different enemy flight.

Dogfighting flights should turn their models to face each other. Flights conducting defensive fire may move their stands so that their tail (rear) is facing the attacking fighter. If more than one flight of fighters is attacking that stand of bombers turn the stand to rear face somewhere between the two.

Fighter Squadrons

A friendly flight may assist one another in combat if they themselves are not engaged and are in base-to-base contact with the friendly fighters. Add a +1 to the Dogfight modifier of a fighter flight for each friendly flight able to assist them, with a maximum of two assisting flights. Players must declare which flight is the attacking flight and which flight(s) are the assisting flights. Only the attacking flight is destroyed if they lose a dogfight or shot down by defensive fire.

Example: A flight of F4F "Wildcats" has moved in base contact with a flight of enemy A6M "Zeroes" and each has a Dogfight modifier of +2 to their dogfight roll. However, before combat begins another flight of Wildcats comes to assist them by making base contact with the original flight of attacking Wildcats. The Dogfight modifier for that attacking flight is now at a +3 to their dogfight roll.

Fighters cannot be assisted by any flight with a Dogfight modifier of -1 or less. Though rare, some bombers and especially fighter-bombers (see below) are nimble enough to help in a dogfight, however, to assist friendly fighters they must have no ordnance: either expended previously or immediately jettisoned. Historically, fighters would not go into dogfights with external fuel tanks still attached, and they would never join one with a bomb slung underneath their fuselage.

Fighter Bombers

Some bombers are simply fighters carrying bombs. Any flight of bombers which has an exact same named Fighter entry on the Aircraft Chart for their nation is reclassified as a Fighter Bomber.

Example: Germany has Focke-Wulf Fw 190A entries on the Kriegsmarine Aircraft Chart for both fighter and bomber variants. The bomber version is reclassified as a Fighter Bomber in the Role column.

Fighter Bombers would never engage in dogfights with a heavy bomb still attached. If they choose to dogfight, they jettison their ordnance and immediately upgrade their Dogfight modifier to the one in the Fighter entry.

Example: A Focke-Wulf Fw 190A fighter bomber gets into a dogfight with a British Sea Hurricane. The German player must immediately jettison its bomb, changing from a fighter

bomber to the fighter variant, and consequently its Dogfight modifier changing from a +3 to a +4.

Escorting Fighters

Flying close escort was an unenviable but important mission for fighters which much preferred the freedom to seek out targets of their own. A flight of fighters can escort any friendly flight (or formation) of aircraft by maintaining base-to-base contact with that flight, or base-to-base contact with any two flights of a bomber formation. If the escorted flight comes under attack by enemy fighters, the escorting flight(s) of fighters moves to base-to-base contact with the attacker.

Example: Player One moves a flight of F4F "Wildcats" into base contact with a flight of SBD "Dauntless" dive-bombers to escort them. Player Two then moves a flight of A6M "Zeroes" to intercept them. The Zeroes make base contact with the dive-bombers, and Player One moves the escorting Wildcats into base contact with the Zeroes. Both stands of fighters turn and face each other, and a dogfight ensues.

Escorting fighters can also benefit from working in teams, and friendly flights of fighters in base contact with escorting fighters which are not engaged add a +1 to the Dogfight modifier of the dogfighting escort, to a maximum of two assisting friendly flights.

Remember, bombers cannot assist fighters in dogfights.

Gunnery Phase – Aircraft vs. Aircraft

Priority Targets

Enemy bombers are the biggest threat to the fleet, and a player may decide his fighters need to intercept those bombers regardless of risk to his fighters from the escorting fighters. Intercepting fighters may refuse to dogfight with escorting fighters and focus on the bombers. However, the escorting fighters get a chance to shoot at the intercepting fighters first. Each player rolls a 1d6 and adds the results with that fighter's Dogfight modifier (just like a regular dogfight). If the escorting fighters score higher than the intercepting fighters score the flight of intercepting fighters is shot down. If the intercepting fighters roll equal or higher than the escorting fighters, they have broken through the fighter escort and attack the bombers. The flight of escorting fighters is unharmed since they were outmaneuvered by the attacking fighters and not shot at.

Example: The previous example, except Player Two chooses to have his Zeroes priority target the bombers. The Wildcats get to shoot at the Zeroes first. Both types of fighters have a Dogfight modifier of +2 and both roll a 1d6. Player One rolls

a 5 and Player Two rolls a 6, bringing both scores to a 7 and 8 respectively. The Zeroes have managed to evade the Wildcats and can now attack the bombers.

Alternatively, if Player One rolled a 6 and Player Two rolled a 5 the modified score would be 8 and 7 respectively. The Zeroes have been shot down while trying to outmaneuver the Wildcats but have failed.



Above: A flight of German Fw-190 fighters protecting Kriegsmarine ships in Norway from enemy bomber attacks.

Defensive Fire!

Most bombers, dive bombers, torpedo bombers, and scout planes were not meant to dogfight, and most are not physically capable of making the turns and rolls required. Moreover, if they did get into a favorable position behind an enemy aircraft, most lack forward firing guns to shoot them down anyway. Instead, these planes have defensive cannons and machine-guns to keep attacking enemy fighters at bay. Fighters that sometimes carry a bomb or rocket payload usually don't have defensive weapons and therefore do not perform defensive fire unless otherwise noted.

Single engine aircraft have the trait Local 1.

Twin and three engine aircraft have the trait Local 2.

Four or more engine aircraft have the trait Local 3.

Fighters and fighter bombers do not conduct defensive fire.

The amount of defensive fire dice available to a bomber formation is pooled together based on the chart above and may be used to defend against any enemy fighter attack against the formation. If a bomber's defensive fire is added to the pool, it no longer has the chance to dogfight - it must stay in the formation.

Example: A formation of three G4M "Betty" twin-engine bombers have a total of six defensive fire dice. If under attack by two US F4F "Wildcats" they can allocate those six

dice however they please: all six against one flight of Wildcats, three on each, etc.

Defensive fire from aircraft is like Local anti-aircraft fire from ships and conducted before the flight of fighters attack. Defending aircraft must be under attack by enemy fighters and in base-to-base contact to conduct defensive fire. A hit is scored against the attacking fighters on natural 6 only, at which point the fighter is badly damaged. A flight of fighters suffering one hit must return to the carrier for repairs. If a flight of fighters is hit two or more times that turn it is destroyed.

Defensive fire generally strikes the front of the fighter where it is most vulnerable & ignores the Tough special rule.

Example: Continuing with the previous example, the G4M "Betty" bombers split their six defensive fire dice evenly against the attacking Wildcats. The first three dice against the first Wildcat result in a 2, 4, and 6. The Wildcat flight is lightly damaged, and backs off to regroup. It does not attack the bombers in this turn. The second volley from the bombers rolls 1, 3, and 5. No hits were scored against the second flight of Wildcats, and they are now free to fire on the bombers.

If escorting fighters intercept enemy fighters attempting to attack the bombers, defensive fire cannot shoot into that dogfight to prevent friendly fire casualties.

Aircraft conducting defensive fire stay in formation and don't engage in dogfights. They may jink and sideslip to throw off the aim of attacking fighters but otherwise proceed ahead and stay in formation. Instead of dogfighting the attacking fighter rolls a 1d6 and modifies that result with their Dogfight score. If the modified number is equal to or greater than the relevant evade score listed below the defending flight is destroyed. Otherwise, the flight proceeds onwards to its target (see below).

Single engine aircraft are hit on a score of 6+

Twin engine aircraft are hit on a score of 5+

Three and four engine aircraft on a score of 4+

Bombers don't have to conduct defensive fire and can choose to dogfight with the attacking fighters. That combat is handled under normal dogfighting rules. Players must decide what gives them better odds of survival: conducting defensive fire or fighting it out in a whirling melee with an attacker and hoping to get on his tail.

Stay on Target!

Bombers which stayed in formation and did not engage in dogfights (but can conduct defensive fire) may proceed to the target and conduct their own attacks as normal. This

includes bombers that were attacked by enemy fighters which were then intercepted by friendly escorting fighters.

Example: A flight of German twin-engine Junkers Ju-88A (dogfight -3) bombers intends to attack and American cruiser and makes base contact with that cruiser. The US players moves a stand of Wildcat (dogfight 2+) fighters move to base contact with the Ju-88's to intercept. In the Victory at Sea Rulebook the best the German player can hope for is a tie if the Ju-88's rolls a 1d6 and score a 6 (modified down to a 3) and the Wildcats do the same and score a 1 (modified up to a 3). In that unlikely situation (3% chance) both aircraft survive to fight next turn.

Bingo Fuel & Winchester Ammo!

The high-speed maneuvers and continuous shooting which takes place during dogfights consumes excessive amounts of fuel and ammunition. After every dogfight each surviving fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft must roll a 1d6. If the result is a 1 or 2 the flight has used most of its ammunition and fuel and must return to the carrier. If the aircraft is land-based, it moves to the nearest table edge and is removed from the game.

Example: A flight of Italian Re-2001 fighters intercept and shoot down a flight of British Swordfish torpedo bombers. At the end of this combat the Italian player rolls a 1d6 to see if the Re-2001 have run dangerously low on ammunition or fuel. The result is a 3, meaning the Italian fighters are still in the fight. Had the result been a 1 or a 2 the Italian fighters must return to their aircraft carrier to refuel and re-arm before engaging in combat again.

This does not apply to aircraft that Stay on Target! but does apply to the fighters attempting to intercept them.

Gunnery Phase – Ships vs. Aircraft

Shooting Down Aircraft

Most ships have some form of defense against aircraft in the form of an AA Battery. If enemy Flights are in range, a ship's AA battery is fired automatically at the beginning of the Gunnery Phase before anything else happens - the ship's crew are expecting battle and aircraft will rarely have an easy time attacking a ship. Remember that an AA Battery with the Local Trait may also attack during movement (see page 49).

Aircraft may only be attacked by AA Batteries, Light Guns with the DP Trait (see page 49) and other aircraft. When targeting enemy Flights, roll the Attack Dice of the AA Battery as normal. These Attack Dice are never modified

because of range, although some hits may need to be re-rolled.

Players may choose at this time use a ship's Light Guns with the DP trait to shoot down aircraft within short range and at half their regular Attack Dice (rounding up) except American Light Guns using the VT Fuses special rule. Aircraft at low altitude and in Point Blank range are too close and moving too fast to be easily tracked and fired upon. All hits made by Light Guns at Point Blank range must be confirmed (like critical hits) by rolling a 1d6, needing a 4 or better. Dive bombers and high-altitude bombers are good targets for Light Guns and hits on them do not need to be confirmed.

AA Batteries (including Local X) have a much higher rate of fire and are perfect for shooting aircraft close to the ship but lack the range to shoot bombers flying high above. A ship's AA Battery cannot fire at high altitude bombers. Light Guns which fire at aircraft cannot be used to fire at ships that turn.

Every 6 rolled on the Attack Dice will result in a Flight being hit and destroyed. Against a Torpedo-Bomber flight or a Strafing Fighter flight that is in base contact with the firing ship, a 5 or 6 is required to hit and destroy it. Flights with the Tough and Very Tough traits require two and three hits (respectively) to be destroyed, except by Light Guns which always kill with one hit.

Example: The USS Atlanta is under aerial attack by several flights of Japanese bombers. The American player, before any dice are rolled, declares what weapons systems and how many Attack Dice are directed at each target. Atlanta's Light Guns have 11 AD, which becomes 6 when halved, rounded up. Three of those AD are shot at a flight of dive-bombers, hitting on a 6. Hits by Light Guns against dive-bombers do not need to be confirmed. The remaining three AD are shot at a flight of torpedo-bombers, but any hits need to be confirmed with a 4+ since they are at sea level and at point blank range.



Above: The Atlanta class was a light anti-aircraft cruiser with 8 double 5" / 38 dual purpose guns as well as dozens of lighter anti-aircraft cannons. Radar assisted gunnery made these ships especially deadly to Japanese aircraft.

An AA Battery may freely split its Attack Dice between multiple Flights if desired, but it will never fire into a dogfight. Aircraft which participated in a dogfight are immune to anti-aircraft fire this turn, even if they won their dogfight and are no longer in contact with enemy flights.

Gunnery Phase – Aircraft vs. Ships

Attacking with Aircraft

The rules for attacking with aircraft are unchanged from how they appear on page 52 of the official rulebook.

Reminder

The Evade! order is the only attack dice modifier when it comes to aircraft attacking ships. Any ship which performs an Evade! in the Movement Phase is harder to hit, and all enemy attack dice rolled against this ship must be re-rolled. That includes attacks from aircraft.

If a ship with the Armored Deck trait is hit by bombs, even those with the Devastating trait, a natural 6 is needed for a possible critical hit.

Ships with the Torpedo Belt X trait have its modifier applied after the damage dice are rolled, so Devastating weapons still cause potential critical hits on a roll of 5 or 6 (page 48 – 49 of the official rulebook makes this clear).

Strafing Warships with Fighters

If there are no enemy aircraft to chase, fighter pilots have been known to shoot up targets of opportunity. This is very risky work, however, and not something to be taken lightly. A flight of fighters can begin strafing attacks on ships only if there is no enemy aircraft left on the table.

Fighter aircraft using machine guns and cannons don't pack enough firepower to seriously damage an armored warship. Few examples exist of warships sunk by strafing fighters, and all involve a lucky shot hitting something like a depth charge or an exposed torpedo warhead which resulted in a large secondary explosion. Even famous examples, such as the story of a German destroyer being sunk by the Tuskegee Airmen, turned out to be not entirely accurate (the ship in this case was an old WWI era Italian torpedo boat in German service, which was badly damaged, but made it to port.)

The most effective use of fighters strafing warships was the suppression of light anti-aircraft defenses, which in turn helped bomber pilots who were actually capable of inflicting serious damage to the target.

In the Movement Phase a player may move a flight of fighters to base contact with an enemy ship and choose to have those fighters strafe that ship. If the flight of fighters survives the barrage of anti-aircraft defensive fire, a 1d6 is rolled, scoring a hit with a result of 5 or better. For each hit the target's AA Battery Attack Dice or Local X is reduced by 1 for that turn. If both have been reduced to 0 attack dice, further strafing by fighters will have no effect.

Remember, at the end of every strafing run, successful or otherwise, roll a 1d6 to see if the flight of fighters has run low on fuel or ammunition (see Being Fuel & Winchester Ammo! on the previous page).



Above: USMC Captain Joe Foss leads eight Wildcat fighters in strafing runs against the Japanese battleship Hiei.

“Attack on the Hiei” by Robert Taylor

National Characteristics

U.S. Navy

Torpedoes & VT Fuses

Details for these national rules are unmodified and in the VAS rulebook on page 170.

Some American ships were equipped with older torpedo types and although weaker, they were reliable & didn't suffer the same defects of the Mk 14 and 15 types. The "Torpedoes" special rule does not apply to Mk 8 and Mk 12 torpedo batteries.

Gunnery Radar

American warships equipped with Radar adds the trait Gunnery Radar and players can give an order (Orders are explained on page 47 of the VAS rulebook) to switch from optical to radar assisted fire control. At the start of the Gunnery Phase and before any shooting starts, a Crew Quality check is performed to detect & lock on to any enemy ship within 30 inches and 5 inches or more from land. If successful, the attacking ship can re-roll one AD against that target per turn.

Example: The USS Washington intends to use its Mk.3 FC radar to direct fire for the main battery of 16" guns against the Japanese battleship Kirishima. The target is within 30 inches of Washington and not close to any landmass, so a Crew Quality check is rolled to track Kirishima. The US player rolls a 1d6 with a passing result of 5, thus successfully targeting the Japanese battleship and re-rolling one AD roll against the Kirishima that turn.

American ships with Advanced Radar are more accurate and easier to use. Advanced Radar removes the +1 to hit penalty when shooting at targets at long range and reduces the +2 penalty for shooting at targets at extreme range to a +1. Enemy ships within 5" of land may be detected and locked on. The bonuses for Gunnery Radar are not cumulative and players must decide which bonus they wish to apply.

Gunnery Radar can shoot through smoke screens and works equally well in day or night and can be used in bad weather. The -1 penalty to hit for shooting at night is no longer enforced however the -1 penalty for bad weather remains in place. Terrain such as an island will block radar waves and targets on opposite sides of terrain cannot be locked on.

Once a ship attempts to use Gunnery Radar on an enemy ship no other ships may fire at that ship that turn, even if the Crew Quality check fails. Reading shell splashes on the radar scope from multiple ships, unable to determine which ones

came from which ship, wasn't very helpful in calculating targeting data. A ship may only detect & lock on to one enemy ship at a time.

Example: As previously, the USS Washington successfully locks on to Kirishima with its gunnery radar. No other ships can attack Kirishima this turn with Main or Light Guns because the resulting confused mass of shell splashes on the radar screen would prevent Washington from effectively correcting its gunfire.



Above: The Mk3 FC radar on USS Washington in 1942.

Gunnery Radar lock persists until the target is destroyed, moves more than 30" away, or gets with 5 inches of or behind terrain (this last condition does not apply to ships with Advanced Radar). Radar lock is lost when the attacking ship attempts to lock on to a different target or performs and Evade order. Gunnery Radar is automatically knocked out and unusable for the rest of the game if a ship suffers the vital damage: Bridge Destroyed or if the ship is crippled.

Enhanced Damage Control

Unlike most navies which had dedicated damage control parties, all American sailors were extensively trained in the specifics of damage control. American ships performing an All Hands on Deck! order (page 47 in the VAS rulebook) reduce critical area damage by one for every point above a **three**.

Example: The USS Washington starts the turn performing an All Hands on Deck! order and passes the required Crew Quality check. At the End Phase a 1d6 is rolled with the result of a 3. In any other navy the damage control attempt has failed, but for the US player it's a success and one point of critical damage is repaired to each critical area. If the result were a 4, two points would be repaired, and so on.

Codeword: Magic

Same as the British "Codeword: Ultra", but for US forces.

Royal Navy

Depth Charge Attacks, VT Fuses

Details for these national rules are unmodified and in the VAS rulebook on page 131.

Gunnery Radar

Same as described in U.S. Navy National Characteristics.

The Senior Service

The Royal Navy traces its origins to the 16th Century and is the oldest of Great Britain's military branches. With 500 years of naval experience behind them, the average sailor in the Royal Navy benefits from the pride and professionalism passed down through generations. Additionally, as an island nation with a vast overseas empire, seamanship is part of the social fabric of British life.

Royal Navy players add a +1 to all Crew Quality rolls.

Codeword: Ultra

The codebreakers at Bletchley Park continued work started by Polish intelligence personnel and successfully deciphered German codes. The ability to read German communications between commanders in the field and headquarters gave the Allies a decisive edge. Some of the most decisive battles of the war were greatly influenced by Ultra intelligence, which allowed Allied commanders to decide on the best place to arrange their forces (and where enemy forces were deployed).

British players may re-roll the Initiative die roll made during the Deployment Phase. The second result must be kept.

Destroyers for Bases

Despite being officially neutral until December 1941, the United States made significant efforts to help the British. One of these was an agreement to provide old destroyers in exchange for use of British bases overseas.

A British force may include U.S. Clemson class destroyers (page 191 of the VAS rulebook).

Arsenal of Democracy

The United States provided Great Britain with a wide variety of weapons and supplies, including naval aircraft. This was especially vital because the Fleet Air Arm was not its own autonomous organization until 1937 and had fallen behind in both technology and doctrine.

British aircraft carriers can add any carrier aircraft to its air wing from the U.S. Navy Aircraft Chart (page 198 in the VAS rulebook).

Marine Nationale

Force de Raid (Raiding Force)

The French emphasized speed instead of armor for many of their newest ship designs. Naval strategists understood France could never match the U.S. and Great Britain in numbers of battleships, so their own ships should be fast enough to out-run what they couldn't out-fight. The **Force de Raid** was a French naval squadron formed around these fast ships, and for a while was the only force capable of catching the new German battlecruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau.



Above: The French destroyer Le' Fantasque at full speed.

French ships with a Flank Speed of 7" or higher may perform a Raid order. The French player moves his ship 4" during the Movement Phase and can make an immediate 90 degree turn and movement of 4" away from whichever ship it attacked after its finished attacking in the Gunnery Phase. Ships performing a Raid order are counted as Fast Moving Targets.

Example: A Duquesne class cruiser moves 7" towards an intended target in the movement phase, ending broadside to the target and just within short range. The French player can activate the Duquesne in the Gunnery Phase, fire its guns at a target, then make a 90 degree turn and move 4 inches away, hopefully not silhouetted and perhaps at long range before the enemy ship can shoot back.

Imperial Japanese Navy

Long Lance and Fire Fighting

Details for these national rules are unmodified and in the VAS rulebook on page 233.

Fan Salvoes

Clarification: Ships in Deep Deployment cannot be hit by Fan Salvoes. **Fan salvos always hit a ships port or starboard side and damage is mitigated by the Torpedo Belt X special rule.**

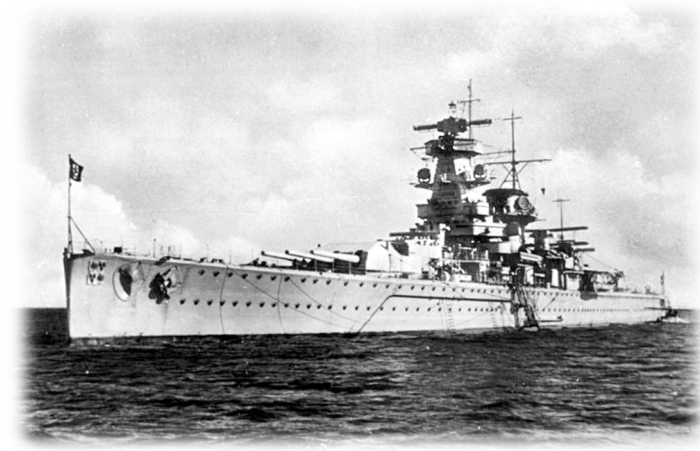
Kriegsmarine

Gunnery Radar

Same as described in U.S. Navy National Characteristics with the exception that German warships do not benefit from having Advanced Radar regarding the Gunnery Radar trait. The Kriegsmarine had decent enough radar, but the Seetakt & FuMO systems were more complicated, didn't have true blind fire capability, and relied optical assistance.

Commerce Raiders

Developed by naval theorist Alfred Mahan, the "Fleet in Being" is a doctrine that allows a small fleet to project power while never leaving port. By appearing at the ready, the enemy is obliged to keep a superior number of warships available just in case. This doctrine was seized upon by the Germans who used a relatively small number of ships to tie down massive amounts of Allied resources in the Atlantic – resources that were needed elsewhere.



Above: German pocket-battleship Admiral Graf Spee which conducted a successful, albeit brief, commerce raiding sortie spanning two oceans early in the war.

German players may utilize this doctrine to even the odds against them. Before the game begins any German player

can remove one Deutschland class cruiser from his fleet, which is then used to threaten enemy with a commerce raiding sortie in another location (off the game board) and obliging the opposing player to counter this new threat with superior blocking forces.

The German player then rolls a 1d6 to determine how many points worth of the opponent's ships are ordered home by their high command to counter the new threat. These ships have urgent orders to depart immediately and are removed from the opponent's fleet before deployment begins.

Roll	Result (WLPS)	Result (SHIPS)
1	0 Points	0 Points
2,3,4	300 Points	250 Points
5,6	400 Points	350 Points

Only one Commerce Raider can be detached for raiding per game and this rule can only be used in games with fleet sizes of 1500 points or more on each side. A Commerce Raider cannot be detached for raiding if it is the most expensive ship (in points) in the German player's fleet.

Kampfgeschwader 100 & Fritz X

In the summer of 1943, Kampfgeschwader 100 performed the first attack in history using precision guided munitions. The Fritz X guided bomb was designed to destroy Allied warships and in following six months this new weapon sunk the battleship Roma, crippled the battleships Italia and Warspite, and badly damaged a dozen other warships in the Mediterranean off the coast of Sicily and Italy.

German players may add one flight of Dornier Do-217K bombers with Fritz X guides bombs to their force for 40 points. The Do-217 is a twin-engine high-altitude bomber with a Flank Speed of 21" and a -3 Dogfight modifier. To launch an attack the bomber needs to be within 6" of the target and roll 1d6 needing a result of 4+ to hit. The attacker can re-roll misses against large warships such as battleships and aircraft carriers. If a hit is scored, 4 Damage Dice are rolled with the Devastating trait applied.

As a high-altitude bomber the Do-217K cannot be hit by AA battery fire, only Light Guns with the DP trait. However, since the bomber must fly straight and level to be accurate, no attack can be made if intercepted by fighters that turn (even if there is no dogfight).

Example: A Do-217K is within six inches of the Warspite, a British battleship. It launches its Fritz X guided bomb and rolls a 1d6 to hit, resulting in a 3. Because the target is a large warship, however, it can re-roll the attack. The 1d6 is rolled again, this time resulting in a 5. Warspite is hit and loses the sum total of 4d6 hull points.

Regia Marina

Poor Coordination & Star Shell X

Details for these national rules are unmodified and in the VAS rulebook on page 259.

Unwilling Soldiers

The belief that all Italian sailors were not well trained and lacked motivation is incorrect and the result of wartime propaganda. While the battleships were used conservatively by the Commando Supremo, cruiser and destroyer captains were chosen for their aggressive attitudes & initiative.

Only battleships and aircraft carriers are affected by the **Unwilling Soldiers** nation rule.

X. Fliegerkorps (10th Air Corps)

Germany transferred some of its best pilots and aircraft to Sicily to support the Afrika Korps by securing supply lines and destroying British convoys crossing the Mediterranean. In January 1941 X. Fliegerkorps had 92 Junkers Ju-88 bombers, 80 Junkers Ju-87 dive-bombers, 27 Heinkel He-111H-6 torpedo-bombers, and 34 Messerschmidt Bf-110C-4 fighter bombers. Escorting them were Messerschmidt Bf-109E fighters from the elite 7. Staffel (Squadron) from Jagdgeschwader 26 (and JG27) which scored 52 enemy aircraft kills without losing a single pilot.

Italian players can add German aircraft to their force from the Kriegsmarine Aircraft Chart.

Decima Flottiglia MAS (10th MAS Flotilla)

On more than one occasion the heroic actions of the men in Italy's special naval operations force altered the balance of naval power in the Mediterranean. This included sinking two battleships, a heavy cruiser, two destroyers, and twenty merchant ships. This accounted for 38% of all warship tonnage and 15% of all merchant ship tonnage sunk by the Regia Marina during the war – for the loss of 73 men in 38 attacks.



Above: Italian Frogmen aboard a miniature submarine.

The fear and anxiety caused by the frogmen of the 10th MAS Flotilla was significant. Sir Admiral Andrew Cunningham, Commander of the British Mediterranean Fleet, is quoted as saying: "Everyone has the jitters, seeing objects swimming about at night, and hearing movements on ships' bottoms. It must stop!"

Before each game the Italian player may request the services of the men in 10th MAS flotilla to help even the odds. Prior to deployment, the Italian player rolls 1d6 for every 500 points of ships in the opposing fleet and consults the chart below to determine the outcome of this mission.

Roll	Result
1 – 4	Mission Failed
5	Success! (Devastating, Damage Dice: 4)
6	Success! (Devastating, Damage Dice: 8)

For each successful mission use the **Random Enemy Ship** rule found in the Rules & Definitions section of this work and apply damage based on the list above. The same ship cannot be hit twice, and that result must be re-rolled. Enemy ships are attacked in port before the battle, so carriers and other Deep Deployment ships are valid targets.

Example: Player One has an Italian fleet and Player Two has a British fleet, and both fleets are 2000 points each. This means the Italian player rolls 4d6 before deployment begins and scores a 2, 4, 3, and 6. The first three results are failed missions and have no impact on the game. However, the last roll was a success, causing Devastating damage with 8 damage dice.

Player One uses the Random Enemy Ship rule which results in damage caused to a British battleship. Eight d6 are rolled resulting in 2, 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4, 6 for a final score of 25 points of damage plus two possible critical hits (the 5 and 6 result). The potential critical hits are re-rolled, both scoring a 4 or better therefore becoming actual critical hits. Player One then rolls 2d10 against the Critical Area Table (page 45 of the VAS Rulebook) and scores 5 and 9, resulting in critical damage to Weapons and Crew.

The carnage, however, doesn't stop there. Since the attack is Devastating the level of damage to the critical areas is increased to the result of a 1d6 roll, not incrementally like normal attacks. Player One rolls 1d6 for each area with critical damage – the Weapons and Crew areas – and scores a 3 and 5 respectively. The damaged battleship, in addition to losing 25 hit points, has a critical damage level of 3 to its Weapons and 5 to its crew, adding even more critical damage and damage points

Flagships & Admirals

Pre-Game – Force Building

Choosing a Flagship

Picking the right ship for an Admiral to lead your fleet from is important. You want a ship that will get the most from whatever particular skills your Admiral possesses while also being survivable enough to keep him alive and in the fight. For that reason – and historically – an Admiral will almost always be found on the biggest and most modern ship.

If your force contains a battleship or aircraft carrier the Admiral will always make one of those his flagship. If a force contains neither of those ship types, a cruiser can be used instead.

Choosing an Admiral

Admirals are not equally talented. Some are traditional and prefer the big guns of battleships and some have embraced the relatively new advances in naval aviation. It's important to remember while most of the personnel who fought in World War II were of the Greatest Generation, the leaders were (mostly) born prior to the 20th Century well before automobiles and aircraft had been invented. By the time The Great War (World War I) had started most of them were already 30 years old.

Players may choose one Admiral per force, who has focused his career path on the venerable battleship or the new aircraft carrier. Each Admiral has their own trait (or traits if you're very lucky) which is a bonus they add to their flagship. If the flagship is destroyed the Admiral goes down with the ship.

Battleship Admiral

These admirals began their careers in a navy in which the battleship was the pride of the fleet. Only a handful of countries could build a modern battleship, and it was a source of great pride and international influence. These are the men, with their years of experience and training, who stood on the bridge and directed famous gun duels such as Denmark Strait and Savo Island.

A great example is U.S. vice-Admiral Willis "Ching" Lee who was a skilled competition shooter – winning seven Olympic medals for his marksmanship. Despite being in the navy, he was an accomplished sniper as well, outgunning several enemy snipers during the Battle of Veracruz. His obsession with shooting and a strong understanding of technology (such as gunnery radar) made him one of the most talented battleship commanders in the Second World War.



Above: vice-Admiral Willis "Ching" Lee

Roll 1d6 to determine which trait your Admiral has.



Lucky

Re-roll one damage dice per turn for hits by the flagship's main guns.



Strategist

The flagship moves only after all ship movement is finished and before aircraft movement begins.



Drill Master

Re-roll failed Damage Control attempts and Crew Quality checks for his flagship.



Rapid Fire

Add 1 extra attack dice to one of the flagships main guns.



Precision Shooting

Re-roll one attack dice per turn for attacks by the flagship's main guns.



Talented

The admiral has two of the traits listed above. Roll 2d6 to determine which. Re-roll ties.

Carrier Admiral

Naval aviation developed at a breakneck pace, and these men were there to see the evolution of fragile scout planes flying from the catapults of converted cruisers to massive purpose-built ships with large flight decks and aircraft that could sink even the largest of battleships.

Admirals in command of an aircraft carrier often times were aviators themselves or had at least attended flight school. They were intimately familiar with the capabilities of the planes and pilots at their disposal and knew how to get the best performance out of both.

One famous carrier commander was Rear Admiral Tamon Yamaguchi. During the war he was the Chief of Staff for the Japanese 5th Fleet and Commander of the 1st Combined Air Group during its air campaign over China. Reassigned to the 2nd Carrier Division (with carriers Hiryu and Soryu) he trained his men ruthlessly in the months leading up to Pearl Harbor. The results were some of the best naval aviators in the world and his ships rampaged throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans, sweeping aside all opposition during the first six months of the war.

Aboard the Hiryu for the Battle of Midway, Yamaguchi decided to go down with his mortally wounded carrier.

Roll 1d6 to determine which trait your Admiral has.



Lucky

Re-roll one damage dice per turn for hits by the flagship's aircraft against enemy ships.



Strategist

Add three 1d6 Scouting rolls prior to deployment and add +1 to all initiative rolls.



Drill Master

Re-roll failed Damage Control attempts and Crew Quality checks for his flagship.



Ace Fighter Pilots

Re-roll one dogfight per turn. Both players re-roll their dice. The second result must be kept.



Veteran Bomber Pilots

Re-roll one attack dice per turn for attacks by the flagship's torpedo or dive bombers.



Talented

The admiral has two of the traits listed above. Roll 2d6 to determine which. Re-roll ties.



Above: Rear Admiral Tamon Yamaguchi

Aircraft Carrier Re-classification List

Great Britain (Royal Navy)

- Activity Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Archer Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Argus Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Ark Royal Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Attacker Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Audacious Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Audacity Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Avenger Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Campania Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Colossus Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Courageous Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Eagle Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Furious Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Hermes Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Illustrious Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Implacable Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Malta Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Merchant Carrier – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Pretoria Castle Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Ruler Class – Light Carrier (CVE)
- Unicorn Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Vindex Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)

The United States (US Navy)

- Bogue Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Casablanca Class – Light Carrier (CVE)
- Essex Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Independence Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Lexington Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Long Island Class – Escort Carrier (CVE)
- Midway Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Ranger Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Sangamon Class – Light Carrier (CVE)
- Wasp Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Yorktown Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)

France (Marine Nationale)

- Bearn Class – Light Carrier (CVL)



Above: The French aircraft carrier Bearn

Germany (Kriegsmarine)

- Graf Zeppelin Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Jade Class – Light Carrier (CVE)

Japan (Imperial Japanese Navy)

- Akagi Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Chitose Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Hiryu Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Hosho Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Ise Class – Hybrid Carrier (Hybrid)*
- Hiyo Class – Light Carrier (CV)
- Kaga Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Ryuho Class – Light Carrier (CVL)
- Ryujo Class – Fleet Carrier (CVL)
- Shinano Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Shokaku Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Soryu Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Taiho Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)
- Zuiho Class – Light Carrier (CVL)

*The Ise Class hybrid carrier operates as a Light Carrier

Italy (Regia Marina)

- Aquila Class – Fleet Carrier (CV)

Ship Data Corrections

Mogami Class Cruiser (Japan)

When the Mogami class cruiser has a prior to 1940 retrofit, its 6.1" main guns gain the "Fast Track" trait. These very same guns are on the Oyodo class cruiser and have "Fast Track" (as they should) so I believe this is a mistake.

Yamato Class Battleship (Japan)

Same as above. The 6.1" main guns from the Mogami were removed in 1940 and placed on the Yamato class battleships as secondary guns. They should also have the "Fast Track" trait.

Zara Class Cruiser (Italy)

The Zara class cruiser should have an armor value of 4+ and costs 5 additional points.

Nelson Class (Great Britain)

Every other ship with a Q Turret has port / starboard firing arcs except the Nelson, which for some reason can shoot directly forward even though it historically could not. Nelson's Q Turret can only fire 90 degrees to port or starboard, not forward.

Renown Class (Great Britain)

Unlike her sister ship Renown, the Repulse did not get an extensive pre-war refit. The game addresses this by giving Repulse her own separate armor value of 4+ instead of 5+ the Renown has. What the game forgets to address is the Renown did not have torpedo bulges either. When using the Repulse remove the Torpedo Belt 2 trait, reducing cost from 360 to 340 points.

~~Admiral Hipper Class (German)~~

~~The Admiral Hipper class cruiser carried reloads for its torpedoes. All Admiral Hipper class cruisers lose the "One Shot" trait to their torpedo batteries.~~

Atlanta Class Cruiser – Group 1 (United States)

For whatever reason the wing 5" / 38 guns have been ignored when it comes to firing arcs. The note under the weapons table should read: Light Guns (16 x 5 Inch) Only 5 attack dice may be fired into the front and aft arcs.

Aircraft Corrections

Barracuda Mk.II Bomber (Great Britain)

The Barracuda should not have a Damage Dice of 4 in its dive-bomber configuration. Every other dive-bomber has a DD value of 1 or 2. It wasn't even a good dive-bomber and struggled to fly at high altitude. Furthermore, a Dogfight value of -1 is inconsistent with the fact that it didn't have forward firing guns. For comparison, the TBF Avenger could fly higher, faster, carry more payload, had forward firing guns, and replaced the Barracuda during the war. Updated stats below.

Flight	Year	Carrier	Role	Speed	Dogfight	Dmg Dice	Traits	Points
Barracuda II	1943	Yes	Dive Bomber	16	-2	2	Devastating	15
Barracuda II	1943	Yes	Torp Bomber	16	-2	4	Devastating	20
Barracuda II	1943	Yes	ASW	16	-2	2	Devastating	20

Dewoitine 376 (France)

The French Navy is missing a carrier fighter aircraft in VAS rulebook. This should be the Do-376 which was embarked on the Bearn when the war broke out, though mostly obsolete by this time. Stats below.

Flight	Year	Carrier	Role	Speed	Dogfight	Dmg Dice	Traits	Points
Do-376	1937	Yes	Fighter	17	-1	0	--	5

Messerschmitt Bf-109 (Germany)

The Germans are missing a lot of aircraft. The Bf-109D wasn't even the variant redesigned for carrier use (as stated in the official rulebook); that was the E model which was re-named Bf-109T (Trager – German for “carrier”). Below is a list of additional Bf-109 variants.

Flight	Year	Carrier	Role	Speed	Dogfight	Dmg Dice	Traits	Points
Bf-109D	1938	No	Fighter	22	+1	0	--	15
Bf-109E	1940	No	Fighter	24	+2	0	--	20
Bf-109T	1941	Yes	Fighter	24	+2	0	--	20
Bf-109F	1941	No	Fighter	26	+2	0	--	20
Bf-109G	1942	No	Fighter	28	+3	0	--	25
BF-109K	1944	No	Fighter	30	+4	0	--	30

Junkers Ju-87 (Germany)

Some variants are missing or wrong. Damage Dice adjusted to be in line with aircraft carrying similar payloads. The C variant is the one designed for carrier use, not the B (although the C was a modified B2).

Flight	Year	Carrier	Role	Speed	Dogfight	Dmg Dice	Traits	Points
Ju-87B	1937	No	Dive Bomber	17	-1	1	Devastating	10
Ju-87C	1940	Yes	Dive Bomber	17	-1	1	Devastating	10
Ju-87D	1941	No	Dive Bomber	18	-1	2	Devastating	15
Ju-87R-4	1942	No	Torp Bomber	17	-2	4	Devastating	15

Change Log

Version 1.1 → Version 1.2

- Added Aircraft Carrier Re-Classification List.
- Minor grammar and wording corrections.
- Added Ship and Aircraft Data Corrections lists.
- Made slight changes to how Light DP Guns vs aircraft is worked out.
- Add Aircraft Commissioned Year & Carrier Refit rule in the Aircraft section.
- Added rules for fighters to disengage in the Tally Ho! part of the Aircraft section.
- Updated rules for Fighters strafing ships.
- Made changes to the rules concerning Gunnery Radar.
- Added Over Penetration and Switch to High Explosive rules in the Rules & Definitions section.
- Defensive Fire by bombers rules adjusted.

Version 1.2 - > Version 1.3

- Adjusted points for German Commerce Raiders national characteristic to reflect WLPS and SHIPS points differences.
- Added Reminder in Aircraft vs. Ships section.
- Re-worked the Torpedo Belt X section of the Traits section back to the official rulebook way of doing things.
- Added text to Launching & Recovering Aircraft to make clear that carriers can do one OR the other per turn, not both.

Version 1.3 -> Version 1.4

- Added additional text to the Restricted trait to make it clear a warship with Restricted guns cannot fire all AD fore or aft.

Proposed Changes

- Main gun turrets firing at different targets suffer a +1 to hit. Historically, this rarely happened (most notably at River Platte by Graf Spee and possibly at Suriago Strait by the IJN battleships firing blindly in the dark and not hitting anything). The reason is calculating the data needed to accurately hit a target was very difficult and doing it for multiple targets would be an order of magnitude worse. Turrets generally had their localized fire control mechanisms, but they weren't as good as those mounted higher above and aided by fire control computers (table) and/or radar.
- Aircraft rules and stats need to be redone. Warlord has too many technical mistakes, and their method of dealing with air combat needs a significant although simple update. Most notably, there needs to be a clear distinction between an aircraft's ability to do dogfight and its firepower once a hit has been scored on an enemy plane. Aircraft like the Fw-190 and F4U having a +4 to their Dogfight rolls breaks the game.
- Add Orders for Aircraft such as Out of the Sun! and Boom & Zoom! As well as national characteristics for aircraft such as Finger Four (Germany), Kido Butai (Japan), and Thatch Weave (US). I understand this isn't a game about air combat but that doesn't mean we can't at least take a look at adding a little flavor to air combat.
- Take a deep look at merchant ships and convoys, night battles, and submarines. This has been largely ignored up to now but we're starting to incorporate these elements into our games.