

GRAND PORT



August 23-27, 1810

Fire as She Bears Scenario



BACKGROUND

The Arc d'Triomphe is one of the world's most famous monuments, honoring those who fought and died for France during both the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Inscribed on the monument are the names of all the great French victories and their commanding generals. Yet there is only one naval action commemorated of the Arc: The Battle of Grand Port, 1810 – the only major French Naval Victory of the Napoleonic Wars. The battle is interesting from several viewpoints. Tactically, it involved relatively evenly matched frigate fleets, who were fighting in confined and treacherous waters. Even more interesting are the epically inept command decisions from both sides....

Grand Port is located on the island of Mauritius (then known as the Isle de France) in the Indian Ocean, due east of Madagascar. The French had a naval base on the island and were successfully raiding British commerce. British Captain Pym decided to attack the French sheltering in Grand Port to put an end to their raiding and, as was typical in the day, regarded the French navy with a less than approving eye. Based on past experience, that assessment might have been warranted, but in the coming battle his overconfidence in British seamanship would prove disastrous. All four British Frigates were lost. It was what we might call a "TPW" – Total Party Wipe!

OBJECTIVES

Victory is simple in this scenario – the side that sinks the most ships wins. However, if the British win, it's the player who damaged or captured the most French ships that is declared the overall winner. I'm sure this will inspire a great deal of teamwork within the British team....

PLAYERS

This scenario is best played with 4-5 players: 4 British and 1 French, or having the French controlled via automatic rules.

TABLETOP

The game is played on a 6' x 4' table, per the map.

DEPLOYMENT

The French fleet starts the game deployed in a crescent, covering access to the harbor. Ships may be placed in any order. All French ships start the game at anchor and may have their ship boats deployed as shown or have them stored on ship. Additionally, the French have fixed land-based artillery battery with light guns.

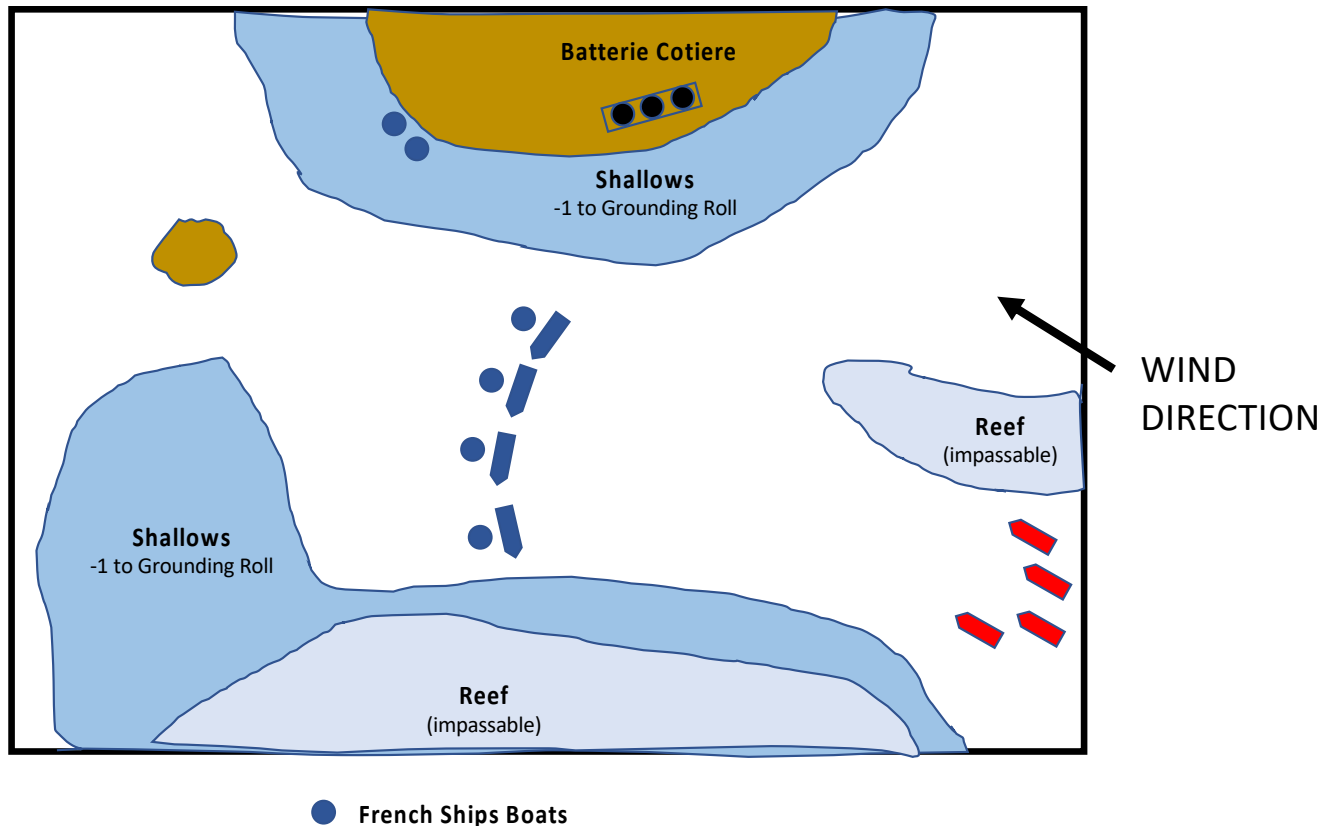
The British fleet enters the game from the lower right corner (Southeast) and have the wind at their backs. All British ship's boats start the game stored on board. For rules that specify wind speed, the wind at the start of the battle are "light"

SCENARIO NOTES

This battle includes quite a few unique scenario rules that appear on the next page with the full Order of Battle. This scenario is being presented in a "rules agnostic" way and should be adaptable to whatever naval rules you prefer. The author is partial to the tried and true "Fire as She Bears." If you wish to use another system, some minor tweaking may be required but all the necessary tools and information you need are here!

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MAP



SCENARIO RULES

Navigation Hazards

Prior to the start of the battle the French removed all of the channel markers, making navigation through the treacherous waters very difficult, especially when ships had a full head of sail on. To reflect this, any ship (British or French) moving more than 3 inches in a turn must make a "Grounding Check" by rolling 1 D6 – if a "1" is rolled the ship is Grounded and may not move until ungrounded (see Ships Boats). For each 3 inches of movement, the grounding roll gets a -1 modifier.

If a ship while moving makes contact with any part of the of the map marked as shallows, it must immediately make a grounding roll with a -1 modifier plus any speed DRMs. If a ship comes into contact with an area of the map marked as a reef, it is immediately grounded (no roll is needed) and takes 1 hull damage.

Ship's Boats

Ship's Boats played a critical role in the battle. Ship's boats move 4 inches per turn and are unaffected by wind and they do not make grounding rolls – they may move freely over any water portion of the map.

Towing

A Ship's boat may tow a larger ship. A towed ship may move 1.5 inches if towed by a single ship's boat and 3 inches if towed by 2 Ship's Boats.

Turning

A Ship's boat may turn an anchored ship up to 45 degrees in a turn. The Ship's boat must be located at the bow or stern of the ship it wants to turn. The turn is a pivot based on the other of the target ship – if the Ship's Boat is on the bow, the Larger ship pivots on the stern. All Navigation hazards are in force during an assisted turn.

Kedging

A ship's boat may attempt to free a ground ship. For each attempt a ship's boat must be adjacent to the ship models bow or stern. The player rolls a D6, adding a +1 modifier if 2 Ship's boats are attempting to free the ship. The attempt is successful of a "6". Ships may not move further into either shallows or a reef during kedging.

Boarding Actions

Players may load their Ship's Boats with crewmen to attempt a board action. Based on the rules used, Players record how many crew points are loaded in the boat and those that are left to man the ship. Players may abandon a stricken ship if they so choose. A boarding action will occur once the boarding party makes contact with an enemy ship. Multiple Ship's Boats can attack a single target.

Deploying

It takes a full turn to deploy Ship's boats and while doing so the ship making the deployment may turn – it can only move straight ahead or drift with the wind.

Targeting

Ship's Boats may be targeted by the enemy player but they are hard to hit and may only be targeted at close range or 9 inches (rules dependent). For each ship firing at a Ship's Boat, roll a D6, each 6 is a hit. A Ship's Boat may take 2 hits before being sunk. Any boarding crew on a sunk Ship's Boat are considered lost.

Resupply (French Only)

The French may create a chain of ships boats, with each boat creating a link 3 inches to either side of it. If the chain links a French ship with the shore, any low on ammunition condition (see below) is ignored - while the chain is intact. Only 1 ship at a time may be re-supplied in any turn.

Ammunition

The battle of Grand Port literally occurred on the other side of the globe and both sides had significant supply problems. To reflect this sad state of logistics, each ship in the French and British Fleets may fire 3 times normally. After it's 3rd firing, a ship is considered to be "low on ammunition" and uses either what your rules specify for low ammunition or fires only ½ of their guns. The French may attempt to resupply 1 ship via a Ship's Boat chain as described above.

BRITISH FLEET

Ship	Rate	Guns	Captain	Crew Rating	Quality
HMS Sirius	5 th Rate	36	Samuel Pym	C	A
HMS Iphigenia	5 th Rate	36	Henry Lambert	B	A
HMS Nereide	5 th Rate	32	Nesbit Willoughby	C	A
HMS Magicienne	5 th Rate	32	Lucius Curtis	C	A

BRITISH SPECIAL RULES**The Single Pilot**

At the start of the battle, the British may place a Pilot on one of their frigates. That Frigates gets a +1 DRM for any Grounding Rolls.

British Command Rivalry

The entire command group of the British fleet was a shambles relationship wise – especially Captains Pym and Willoughby who detested one another. To reflect this state of affairs, British players may not communicate prior to the battle (no coordinated plan making). During the battle they may communicate only by written notes. These notes are limited to 3 words if communicated by flags (instantaneous) or if conveyed by a ships boats, they may be of any length.

FLAG COMMUNICATION

When using Flag Communication if there is a another British ship that is closer and in the same general direction as the targeted ship, the communication is first given to the intervening ship's captain and that player may choose to pass on the message to the intended ship, alter it or just "accidentally" lose it. Communication was very dicey back then.

FRENCH FLEET

Ship	Rate	Guns	Captain	Crew Rating	Quality
Bellone	5 th Rate	40	Guy-Victor Duperre'	C	B
Minerve	5 th Rate	48	Pierre Bouvet	B	B
Victor (1)	Corvette	18	Henri Moisson	B	B
Ceylan	East Indiaman	26	Vincent Moulac	D	D

(1) Victor starts the scenario already damaged and should have 25% of its hull points marked off.

FRENCH SPECIAL RULES

Target Priority

A French ship must target the closest British Frigate, as long as that ship has not struck it's colors. The only variance to this rule is that the French player may choose to target either a British Ships Boat if it is close than a British Frigate.

1st Critical Hit

The 1st critical hit on any anchored French ship has an additional impact of cutting the French anchor lines. The affected ships start drifting 1.5 inches per turn (commencing with the next turn) until either grounded or the French player makes a command roll to set sail.

Setting Sail

The French fought this battle without a lot of maneuver and ran all of their ships aground to prevent them being taken by the British. In order to set sail, the French player must first pull up their anchor (which takes a full turn). On the following turn they roll 1D6 to set sail and are successful on a 4+. If they fail they drift 1.5 inches based on wind direction and must try again next turn.

Shore Battery

The French has ashore battery which can fire in a 90 degree arc with Light artillery. The battery can take 3 hits before being silenced. The battery can pivot and move up to 3 inches but may not fire the turn it does show. The battery is NOT limited by French target priority and may fire on any target is wishes.