

PLUCK NOT THIS ROSE - SCENARIO II - AUG 1459 - BRIEFING

...Being A Kriegsspiel Scenario Set In The England Of The 1450's

Designed And Produced By Rufus Enterprises

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

We find ourselves in the England of King Henry VI. Unfortunately, this good and well meaning King suffers from catatonic schizophrenia. He believes he is made of glass and will shatter on the slightest impact. This naturally renders him inactive much of the time, and much under the sway of his French Queen and her favourite courtiers.

The latter form a party of insiders who have become generally known as the Lancastrian party. Lancastrian mainstays are Lords Audley, the Queens champion (rumoured also to be her lover and the father of Prince Edward), Clifford, Percy and Somerset. The three latter have sworn blood vengeance owing to the deaths of family members at the hands of the Yorkists after the first battle at St Albans.

The 'outsider' Yorkist party aligns behind the powerful Duke of York, the Kings Lieutenant in Ireland, and includes the Lords of March, Clarence, Rutland, Salisbury, Warwick, Norfolk, Essex and Lords Fauconberg and Hastings. They enjoy the support of the merchant class, especially in Calais and London, and thus have the virtual freedom of the seas. It is estimated that Warwick might raise up to 20,000 men in the Home Counties, though many will be unarmed peasants.

York, Salisbury and Warwick have all been formally declared TRAITORS. A Traitor's death involves hanging, drawing and quartering, and this extends to those who can be shown to have communicated with traitors.

A few other nobles naturally incline towards the Yorkist cause, including Bonville in the West country. However, the Yorkists recently suffered a setback outside Market Bosworth. Warwick was defeated by the Kings army just before his uncle Salisbury could come to his aid, though he managed to retreat to Leicester in reasonable order, and Salisbury with Fauconberg and Hastings to Tamworth likewise.

Many nobles still remain neutral in the conflict, not least because many of them, including the Greys and Nevilles, have family members on both sides; these neutral lords have however been known to have been swayed by the prospect of gain, or the threat posed by armed bands in their local area. Earl Stanley was swayed only to join the King in the recent battle by the promise of a Dukedom, and the castles and estates necessary to sustain that increased status. Even so, he is reported to have held his troops back

until the outcome appeared certain. He has not yet been granted any estates nor castles.

RECRUITMENT

The nobles featuring in the game will be assemble a retinue of about 1000 men (mixed longbowmen and men at arms) at each of their castle; more at the bigger castles like Ludlow and Warwick. King Henry has powers of ARRAY which compel all able bodied men to join his banner. However the King does not usually wish to feed ill-armed peasants who will desert at the first opportunity, and will therefore prefer to recruit only well-equipped troops, perhaps taking money in lieu from the rest.

MERCENARIES of varying quality are readily available from outlying areas and notably the Celtic fringes. Due to the cessation of wars in France and the Balkans, continental mercenaries are also arriving at UK ports in some numbers. The Burgundians specialise in the handgun.

SUPPLIES will always be difficult to come by for large forces, which should be dispersed around the countryside if they are to stay in the area for any period of time. Hungry troops may desert, or worse join the enemy! Junior officers will complain to their commanders when supplies are running low.

The WEATHER has included some rain and there is not much dust on the road. The watercourses are of average depth. Guns, and especially siege guns, can cross most watercourses only at fords or bridges. Wind direction will be rolled for randomly at the chief umpire's discretion. Prevailing winds are from the west or SW, and most ships have difficulty sailing at more than 45 degrees off the wind.

TOTAL TWO D6 DICE TO DETERMINE ORIGIN OF WIND:

2 = N, 3 = NW

4, 5 = S

6, 7 = SW

8 = W, 9 = SE

10, 11 = NE

12 = E

SCOUTING was notably poor throughout this period; armies will very often be surprised by the proximity of the enemy, and commanders may need to make swift decisions to avoid the consequences of disorder or of fighting from inferior terrain.

SIEGES

Some artillery is available, but is primitive and moves and loads very slowly. Much of the royal siege ORDNANCE disappeared when the Kings French territories were lost, and the four existing siege guns (with names such as EDWARD and DIJON) are now found only in the Tower Armoury, which Lord Scales holds with a small Lancastrian garrison.

Warwick's own castle contains many (static) guns however, and is virtually impregnable. A well stocked castle can hold out against even a large enemy force, almost indefinitely in game terms.

TACTICAL ISSUES

It is very long established custom to divide armies into vanguard, main battle, rearguard and possibly reserve. In order to preserve order, armies will preferably march sideways onto a battlefield in this order, preferably from the left so that the vanguard occupies its traditional position of honour on the right of the line. It is possible also to march from the right, however, or for large armies to march on in three successive lines, with the vanguard in the front line, main battle in the second, and so on. Any other approach to the battle involves serious and perhaps fatal risk of disorder in face of the enemy.

Noble retinues, and the professional soldiers from the garrisons of Ireland and of Calais, consist of mixed bands of longbowmen and well-armoured men at arms. Handguns are very slow loading by comparison, but need less training, can penetrate armour better, and are less affected by windage. Field fortifications can include ditches and banks as well as sharpened stake abatis, and use is made sometimes of wagon laagers, chained together in the Hussite style, as at the Battle of the Herrings.

Missile troops of all kinds may be of more or less use in exceptionally wet weather. What field artillery is available moves too slowly to be dragged into encounter battles, and is only likely to appear in prepared positions. Archers and handgunners can normally evade heavier opponents on foot.

Battles in France, including Crecy and Agincourt, have proved cavalry to be too vulnerable to archery unless they can catch the enemy by surprise, as at Patay, before they have prepared a defence.

PURSUIT & CAPTURE

Unless a river or other obstacle slows their escape (as at Towton or Tewkesbury), breaking troops can only be thoroughly exterminated by noble or hobilar units who have remained mounted in reserve throughout the battle.

Though the commoner losers of a battle, and especially an assault on a fortified town, are often massacred, the code of honour requires that noble prisoners shall be captured and held indefinitely until an appropriate ransom be paid. That is, unless they have attacked in battle the personal standard of the reigning monarch, in which case the law states that they are traitors to be hung, drawn and quartered, unless the King pardons them. Or unless they have previously instigated a blood feud by themselves butchering noble prisoners, in which case revenge may legitimately be taken (impaling their heads over gates or bridges is popular).

Should rebels succeed in capturing the King, they should think more than twice before killing him. Such actions are dangerous to everyone of quality, since they undermine the established social order. Regicides will receive great opprobrium, even from their own family, for the hateful crime of killing a divinely appointed monarch, and are likely to be excommunicated by the Church, which remains a powerful presence in the land. In present circumstances, regicide is also wholly unnecessary, since recent experience has proved King Henry to be very amenable to nobles using him as a puppet to rule in his name - as do the Lancastrians presently.

A NOTE ON LONDON

The Corporation and population of the capital is heavily disposed towards the Yorkist cause, and particularly towards Warwick. He has spent an awful lot of money in currying their favour, most of it looted by the Calais based navy from foreign mercantile vessels (which also went down well with the dominant merchant class).

It is for this reason that the Royal family long since sought refuge in the Lancastrian heartlands of the Midlands.

Despite the existence of a small Lancastrian garrison with heavy artillery in the Tower of London, under Lord Scales, which could block most river access, all observers agree that the King could reduce London probably only by hunger after a very prolonged siege by large numbers of troops (due to the circumference of the walls).

ADDITIONAL BRIEFINGS TO COME:

- *Laminated map with legend identifying noble owning each stronghold by his shield [ON THE DAY OF THE GAME]*
 - *Gazeteer of the map strongholds [SEE BELOW]*
- *A further verbal briefing may be given for each role, when they are assigned on the day. Umpires will also receive a confidential briefing.*

PLUCK NOT THIS ROSE, FOR IT HATH THORNS

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MAP GAZETEER FOR AUG 1459 - CASTLES NOBLES & AFFINITIES

Gazeteer	Affinity	Current location	Perceived sympathies
!	Free company of Welsh hobilar light horse	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Normally unaligned
Abingdon	Oxford	Hedingham, Essex	Lancastrian sympathiser
Alnwick Fortress	Northumberland	.. Besieging York	Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Andover	Devon	Marlborough	Lancastrian sympathiser
Appleby	Greystoke		Normally unaligned
Arundel Fortress	Fitzalan of Arundel	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist sympathiser
Ashby de la Zouche	Lord Hastings	With Salisbury at Tamworth	Yorkist sympathiser
Axminster	Wiltshire	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian sympathiser
Bamburgh Fortress	Northumberland	York	Lancastrian - sworn
Barry	York		Yorkist - sworn
Basing	Wiltshire		Lancastrian sympathiser
Berkeley	Berkeley		Normally unaligned
Bishop Auckland	Clifford of Cambridge		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Blandford	Salisbury	Tamworth	Yorkist - sworn
Bolingbroke	Tudor		Lancastrian sympathiser
Bolton	Scrope		Normally unaligned
Braintree	Suffolk		Normally unaligned
Brentwood	Fauconberg	With Salisbury at Tamworth	Yorkist - sworn
Bridgend	York		Yorkist - sworn
Caister	Norfolk	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Calais Fortress	Warwick		Yorkist - sworn
Cardiff Fortress	Royal castle		Normally unaligned
Carmarthen Fortress	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Carnarfon Fortress	Royal castle		Normally unaligned
Castle Combe	Minor neutral		Normally unaligned
Chepstow	Minor neutral		Normally unaligned
Chester Fortress	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn

Gazeteer	Affinity	Current location	Perceived sympathies
Chippenham	Somerset	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Colchester Fortress	Suffolk		Normally unaligned
Conisborough	Cambridge		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Corfe	Minor neutral		Normally unaligned
Cromer	Norfolk	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Daventry	York		Yorkist - sworn
Dinbych	Pembroke		Lancastrian - sworn
Doncaster	York		Yorkist - sworn
Donnington	Hungerford		Lancastrian sympathiser
Dover	Free company of Burgundian handgunners	Dover, seeking paid service	Normally unaligned
Dunstanburgh	Northumberland		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Egremont	Egremont		Lancastrian - sworn
Exford	Exeter		Lancastrian - sworn
Farnham	Howard	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist sympathiser
Faversham	Warwick	Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Fotheringay	York owns this, despite the map	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Glamorgan	Warwick	Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Grafton	Earl Rivers		Normally unaligned
Harlech Fortress	Royal castle		Normally unaligned
Hedingham	Oxford	Hedingham, Essex	Lancastrian sympathiser
Holt	Earl Stanley, now made Duke of Derby by the King	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Normally unaligned
Kidderminster	Essex	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist sympathiser
Llandeillo	York		Yorkist - sworn
Llanstephan	Herbert		Yorkist - sworn
London	Royal Train of Siege Ordnance	Guarded By Lord Scales in the Tower	Lancastrian - sworn
London Fortress equivalent	See special note in briefing		Yorkist sympathies
Ludlow Fortress	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Malton	York		Yorkist - sworn
Market weighton	Warwick	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Middleham Fortress	Salisbury		Yorkist - sworn
Montacute	John Neville of Montagu		Normally unaligned

Gazeteer	Affinity	Current location	Perceived sympathies
Newbury	Buckingham		Lancastrian - sworn
Newport	Buckingham		Lancastrian - sworn
Newton Abbot	Exeter		Lancastrian - sworn
Northallerton	Cambridge		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Okehampton	Devon	Marlborough	Lancastrian sympathiser
Oswestry	Talbot of Shrewsbury	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Normally unaligned
Pembroke	Pembroke		Lancastrian - sworn
Petersfield	Somerset		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Pickering	Earl Rivers		Normally unaligned
Pleshey	Essex	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist sympathiser
Pocklington	Northumberland		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Pontefract Fortress	Royal castle		Normally unaligned
Preston	Stanley of Derby	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Normally unaligned
Raby Fortress	Salisbury	Tamworth	Yorkist - sworn
Rising	Norfolk	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Rushden	Oxford	Hedingham, Essex	Lancastrian sympathiser
Ruthyn	Grey		Normally unaligned
Salisbury	Salisbury		Yorkist - sworn
Sandal Fortress	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Sevenoaks	Fauconberg		Yorkist - sworn
Sherwood Forest	Free company of longbowmen	Outlawed	Normally unaligned
Shrewsbury	Talbot of Shrewsbury	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Normally unaligned
Skipton	Clifford of Cambridge		Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Spalding	Oxford	Hedingham, Essex	Lancastrian sympathiser
St Neots	Essex	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist sympathiser
Stamford	Warwick	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Stansted	Audley	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian - sworn
Stratford on avon	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Sudeley	Wiltshire		Lancastrian sympathiser
Tattershall	Cromwell		Normally unaligned

Gazeteer	Affinity	Current location	Perceived sympathies
Taunton	Bonville		Yorkist sympathiser
Thetford	Norfolk	With Warwick at Leicester	Yorkist - sworn
Tickhill	Audley	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian - sworn
Tiverton	Devon		Lancastrian sympathiser
Trowbridge	Somerset	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian - sworn with blood feud
Tutbury	Lord Hastings	With Salisbury at Tamworth	Yorkist sympathiser
Wantage	Buckingham	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian - sworn
Ware	Earl Rivers		Normally unaligned
Warkworth Fortress	Fauconberg	With Salisbury at Tamworth	Yorkist - sworn
Warwick Well gunned fortress	Warwick		Yorkist - sworn
Weymouth	Wiltshire	With Lancastrian army at Bosworth	Lancastrian sympathiser
Wigmore	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn
Wingfield	Suffolk		Normally unaligned
Wisbech	Oxford	Hedingham, Essex	Lancastrian sympathiser
Wressle	Cromwell		Normally unaligned
Yeovil	Salisbury		Yorkist - sworn
York	Free company of Highlanders	York, in Percy's employ	Normally unaligned
York Fortress	York	Last heard of in Ireland	Yorkist - sworn