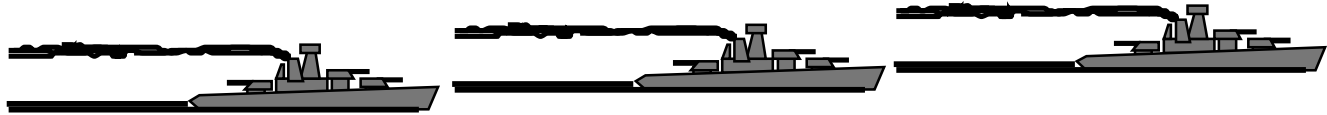


# TASK FORCE 144



The Official Newsletter of Model Warship Combat, Inc.

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

Fall - 2005

## CALENDAR OF MWC EVENTS

**November 19-20, 2005:**

**Sanford Turkey Shoot**

**Port Authority Pond, Sanford, FL**

**Site Host:** Rick King, (407) 322-7750  
rick.m.king@lmco.com

**June 10-16, 2006:**

**MWC Nationals 2006:**

**Cocoa, FL**

**Site Host:** Rick King, (407) 322-7750  
rick.m.king@lmco.com

**Hotel:** Ramada Inn Cocoa Beach,  
(321) 631-1210, tell them you are  
with the Model Boat Group



The submersive activities of the Axis went to new lows at this Nats.

Photo by Steve Reichenbach



Sometimes you can't see the battlers for the woods.

Photo by Steve Reichenbach

## Michigan Nats:

**June 19-24, 2005**

### MONDAY AT NATS

by Steve Reichenbach



NATS nats nats nats nats! Excitement was in the air as we chanted with glee. NATS nats nats nats. This would be my first Monday at NATS in 3 years. I missed the Perry NATS and also the Rolla NATS because my company began having its annual meeting in mid-July. This NATS was different - being in late June. It had only been a few weeks since the Fray at Brays event, and now folks were coming

together in Michigan for the big event of the year!

Kevin Bray and I drove most of the day Friday, arriving at a hotel on the west side of Michigan, near a "great lake". We woke up Saturday morning, where ironically a waffle iron tested our mettle. I coated the iron with non-stick spray, filled it with my batter, and about a minute later had what disintegrated on my plate as a waffle ugly enough that Chris Groissant actually took a photo of it with his phone. Kevin Bray couldn't stop laughing because his waffle came out "best of scale".

We quickly downed the waffles (mine with lots of syrup and my eyes closed) and headed north. As the interstate bordered the great lake, we couldn't resist the opportunity to put



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a boat in the water. We found a beach, and being June we recreated the D-Day landings in Normandy as Kevin's LST hit the beach with the strong waves of the lake washing it ashore.

With Garvin as our GPS guide, we made it to the Super 8 motel by noon. Kevin and Chris quickly noted that rooms on one side of the hotel had easy access to the rear parking, so we swiftly grabbed rooms near the doors facing the rear lot (enabling us to unload boats through the windows). A few cell phone calls were made to the "Texas Convoy" and before long the front desk clerk was swamped with calls to reserve odd numbered rooms downstairs.

As the convoy arrived Saturday at about dinner time, the halls were abuzz with activity. In a slight

mishap, Bryan Finster fell down the stairs while carrying his Nagato. In a classy move, Bryan secured a meeting room downstairs to work on boats for anyone who had a room upstairs. The hotel staff was awesome, bringing us fresh popcorn, and even HELPING ME TO CARRY SPRAY PAINT into the meeting room so I could touch up the paint on Gneisenau!

Seeing the pond was so exciting. The Michigan guys, especially the Au's and Mark Roe did a great job getting the site ready for NATS. They cleared a huge amount of land near the shore, giving us a wonderful site for the battle.

Sunday was the normal humm of activity, with lots of ship testing, speed trials, and the like. My new boat was on speed, but unfortunately



The Ground Floor SilkSpan Ship Shoppe and Pizza Parlor

photo by Steve Reichenbach

took about 6 seconds to back up. For example, with your ship doing 24 seconds forward, flip your transmitter from full forward stick to full reverse. Then count to 20 while your boat drifts 15 feet, watch as the prop spits water madly about the stern in a rush of cavitation, and then finally the boat would begin to stop and reverse. With this unacceptable condition, I decided that Sunday was a great day to go buy a new shaft, and solder a prop on in the reverse direction. Despite all the talk of super reverse powers being very controversial, nobody seemed to have a problem with my Gneisenau's performance when I improved the 15 foot drift to a mere 5 foot drift before the ship would stop and reverse.

Admiral Tim Beckett led the Axis fleet into battle on Monday. Our flagship was the historic Bismarck, flanked by Brian Lamb's new Bismarck, and Lief Goodson's mighty Tirpitz. With all the excitement, battle was called before any Axis BANZAI cheers, leaving the Axis fleet in disarray before the war even began.

Lines were formed with the Allied fleet stacked in 2 lines on the north side of the pond, and the Axis fleet stacked in 2 lines on the south side. The front lines of each fleet were surprisingly cautious when battle was called. The fleets went stern-to-stern and it was actually a full minute or so before action really began.

My Gneisenau was teamed up with Mark Roe, Mike Tanzillo and Rick King, also in

Scharnies. We played a good cruiser game in the rear of the Axis fleet, occasionally getting a good shot on the Allies, while taking minimum damage. While we played it safe, the Allied dogs sank their teeth into the Bismarck trio.

Lief, Tim and Brian bore the brunt of the Allied attack. A pair of North Carolinas, and a horde of 26 second Allied battleships swarmed over the mighty German battleships. By the end of the first sortie, all 3 Bismarcks were pumping hard. I came off the water with a mere 6 above, and was hoping for more action in the second sortie.

Another thing about NATS that was both exciting and strange was the fact we battled single fleets instead of the usual split fleets. With no "B" fleet to take photos or video, 2005 may be the shortest NATS video in recent history.

Before the second sortie began, Bryan Finster reminded the Axis captains that we failed to start the day off with the appropriate team cheer. It was quickly decided that we would need at least 3 BANZAI

cheers before each fleet sortie began. Perhaps due to some Nazi medication, Fluegel embellished the BANZAI with a wonderful little dance, with his hands forming a perfect triangle above his head. Hitler would have been so proud.

At the second Axis team meeting, it was decided that because the Bismarcks were taking such a beating, we would form a single line and have all ships help with the attack. With the Scharnies up front, several Allied captains visibly drooled in excited anticipation. Battle was called, and within a few seconds the damage count on my boat tripled, and a few minutes later there were several calls for "man in the water!" as the Allied fleet pounced on the Axis and drew blood.

The rest of the week was really a blur. There were several trips to Wal-Mart, fun getting lost in Ionia while looking for a place to eat, and so many other good times. NATS 2005 will go down in history as one of the greatest NATS of all times!

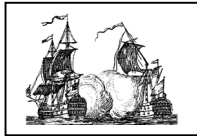


Lief's Bismarck shows the results of some triple bypass operations.

photo by Steve Reichenbach

## Tuesday at Nats

by Bob Hoernemann



It was another beautiful day Tuesday morning, sunny with just a few fluffy clouds and temps in the 70s. Most captains were up early grabbing breakfast in the hotel. I had the great pleasure of hauling all 6 of my ships down to the car from the second floor. At 7:30 there were not many people at the pond yet so I got unloaded and parked my car next to the tent instead of down the road like I did on Monday. This turned out to be a bad idea when I found a little chip in my windshield on the way home.

As everyone started to arrive I heard a few comments about possibly having a longer campaign since we only had one fleet. Most battlers (me included) thought this was going to be a good idea. But first we had a fleet battle to get through. Just before battle as I was walking to fill my bottle, Finster asked me if I was having fun. I had to admit that I was not having as much fun as last year. "That's because you're admiral," I was told.

### Tuesday AM fleet battle:

The fleet battle started without Don Cole (Electrical), Andy Ray (New ship blues) and Graham Kozak (Just arrived) sitting out for the Allies. The Axis were only missing Andy Bruce (Also with new ship blues) and they got back Dirty who missed Monday with several ship issues. Numbers were on the Axis side for this battle but several Axis captains did not think it would matter. I was still a little nervous, "That's because you're admiral!"

First sortie started like all the others during the week. The Allies put in on the left and Axis on the right. I'm not sure why we always did this as a small area by a downed tree caused a lot of glitches; Doug Hunt had it the worst. Since my wingman (Don) was out I tried to

stay with Dave Au who also lost his wingman (Andy). Of course I lost him for long parts of the battle and found myself with Doug after Tim Krakowski went down.

The Allies tried to keep a line across the pond with the 26 second ships and the Axis spent a lot of time playing with the few 24 sec ships that we had. The slow Allies did have Leif and Steve Reichenbach crash through our lines and take a lot of damage for it. Just like both battles Monday I found myself with most of my bbs left as the sortie wound down. Also just like Monday I managed to find a hurt Axis on 5 to give them to. The Gneisenau of Steve Reichenbach was hurt and being chased by NCs of Chris P and Chris G. I was more than happy to put the rest of my sidemounts into Steve. If only he had another minute left, but he just made it off his 5. The only ship lost in the first sortie was Tim K's South Carolina; he had a pump issue that did him in.

Since Tim K sunk in the first sortie he took my camera and filmed the second sortie. The sortie started out with Doug Hunt, Pat Clarke, Dave Au and an NC going after Steve R to try and put him down. Tim B came in to try and defend

Steve but Steve chose to run and sank about four minuets into the battle.

The battle then centers on me and Doug Hunt, who had lost a prop. There are many Axis ships after us and I am only saved by a damaging ram from Leif. Doug sinks just as I pull out my ship to patch. By the time I go back in the water has cleared. As Leif went back in he backed right into Dave Au and gave him several stern gun shots. Moments later Leif pays for it as he gets tripled by an NC. Dirty then utters the famous last words all captain dread, "Oh no my pump stopped.." He sank with only four aboves and one big unseen ram hole.

Then Brian Lamb became the main Allied target but was saved by Dirty's 'man in the water'. Gerald then started a fray by the shore as he was listing to port. Kevin Bray, the two Bruders and Steve R. all tried to finish him off but he stayed afloat half tipped over for several minutes. Finally he goes down next to shore. In the meantime the NCs and Chris Au's Jap battle cruiser are taking after Mike T's Sharny. Way out by the rope line Mike is finally put under by the prop wash of two NCs. Many captains then call five before



Don Cole: Any Nats is a Good Nats

Photo by Steve Reichenbach

Steve R goes to get Mike's ship. Josh Bruder and Tim B traded a few sidemounts at the end of the battle. Brain Lamb was chased around by Matt Clarke, the NCs and Chris Au. He is saved by a shortage of bbs and Tim B's Bismarck.

## Tuesday Campaign:

My favorite part of NATS is campaign. Can't you tell with the 6 ships I bring along? I did find out why I do this, it's called Grossaint Disease. The NEED to bring more than four ships to a battle, not many people have it but it is contagious. I had spent a lot of time thinking about how to run NATS with one fleet. Who would be doing what task for how long, when to launch convoys, that sort of stuff. The first blow to my plan came when we voted to add 20 minutes to campaign. Then campaign was going to start before I had my ships ready. There was a long line at the CO2 bottles and I started to get a little frazzled. Our CD Brian Lamb was nice enough to push the start of battle back a little and everything turned out ok. I had built two CVLs this winter with one of them was set up with pumps as a warship. I also bought another one from Steve Reichenbach at the Fray. Our plan was to put all three of them on the water to start campaign and let the Axis blast the "Q" carrier. Tim K, Steve Reynolds and I took them out and were escorted by Andy, Don, Josh and Pat. Kevin Bray also took his LST out with us. All of the ships made the forward and return run. Tim K did a great job of running through the Axis ships and eating bbs. He even did a circle like he lost his rudder. We patched the CVLs (very light damage) and Kevin replaced Steve as his LST sank while we were patching. Again we made the forward run with light damage and started our return. This is when I noticed Tim K's CVL had sunk. After the battle I counted her and found 88 holes plus another 30 bbs in the superstructure. If you use a 30%

hit rate and count the misses that's about 300 Axis bbs she took off the water. Both CVLs made it back and Kevin started to patch the pretty one. I took out the Minneapolis looking to shoot down targets and shoot up convoy ships. About this time I notice Doug Hunt taking his Wee Vee out of the water. She had lost a prop again and fallen to the Axis hoards. We also lost Graham Kozak's Brooklyn early in the campaign. She was down for almost an hour by the time he was able to get her out. There is no worse feeling than leaving your ship in the water during campaign. Thankfully there was just a small amount of water in the radio box and everything still worked. After I had spent my bbs I was waiting out my 5 trying to get Kas on the radio and find out how many convoy runs we had made. But Kas had put the radio down to help his son with the Brooklyn. Tim K and I tried to put it together from memory. While I was talking Finster lined up on the Minneapolis and gave her a few good sidemounts and called out "Better watch your ship Admiral, that's my only warning." I thanked him and moved closer to port. Just as I was about to come in John Bruder was escaping Tim Beckett and Jeff Lide. John barely made it off the water. Kevin Bray was now putting in his Big Mammie, the CVL he'd run was iffy for a return trip and was left at the forward base. His plan was to run convoys until the Europa hit the water and then sink her. He had ranged his sidemounts out just for this task. I thought this would be a great time to use our last 16 points with a Titanic and a freighter. Pat Clarke ran the big monster and I escorted her with one other battleship. Most of the action was on the Europa and we made it forward with no holes at all. Tim K came in a couple a minutes later with the freighter. The Europa was listing heavily and just made it into port. I found out latter that Kevin had run

down the whole length of the pond, fought off an Axis escort and lined up his sterns; only to hear a puff of air. See you need to load you guns in order for them to make holes. Halfway back I left the Titanic and went to shoot down targets with my Warspite. There was quite a bit of action around the Axis base as we tried to sink Steve's Gneisenau. I sent most of my bbs his way and only when I was out did I notice no one was guarding the last Axis target. I missed my big chance to get it. Right at the end of campaign I heard that Dallas has lost the Karlsruhe pretty far from shore. After the battle Fluegel the elder was listening in the water for its pump and found it. He walked back to shore covered in weeds and posed for a "Creature" photo. I found out later that the Axis had run the small convoys early in the battle (Steve's sub and Jeff's patrol boat). Steve sank on the way back and Jeff made both runs. Kevin told me after the battle he watched Jeff dig a trench in the shore for his little ship and filled it in. Jeff came back and dug it out again so Kevin kicked some more dirt back in it. Steve's sub later had a fire in his room; I think the batteries had got wet in the sink. Chris G & Chris P both made LST runs. Chris P sank coming back on his second trip. Tim K brought a freighter forward but could not bring it back. Mark Roe's "Rainbow Fleet" made four forward runs, one returned safely while two others sank coming back. Rick King's Altmark made a full run and made it forward a second time. Since we really had no score keepers with one fleet we all sat down and had a debriefing to see what happened. When Tim K was doing scores we found that we had made too many points worth of convoy runs. So we deleted the last convoy run Tim K did with a freighter. Good thing he went out after the Titanic.



## Wednesday and One-on-Ones

by Tim Krakowski



Wednesday brings a welcome respite to the NATS daily battle schedule. The toll of the early battles starts to show, and most captains take things a little slower. Of course, members of the BOD were up at the crack of 9 and at the lakeside hashing out various club details. While the meeting is open to all members, only Rick King managed to drag himself out of bed to present his proposal for next year's NATS site – Cocoa Beach, FL.

With the BOD business completed, I started focusing on the fun part of Wednesday – 1 on 1s. The first match of the day was really a rematch of a heated exchange from last year dubbed “Rematch of the Century.” Admiral Bob was pitted in a duel to the death with Josh Bruder, soon to be Cadet Bruder at the Air Force Academy. By the way, I highly recommend NOT playing Halo 2 against Josh. He's like a virtual Navy Seal. Most of the time, he killed me before I knew he was there!

Back to ships. The first battle started as most battles do – cautiously. However, the uneasy peace didn't last as each captain soon blasted away as his enemy! The battle lasted 2 sorties, but was cut short when Admiral Bob's Warspite succumbed to the many “speed holes.” The final tallies were:

Bob H.	39-8-20	Sunk 2590
Josh Bruder	37-4-26	1770

After watching that first battle, I was jonesing for some action, and was fortunate to be invited into the Class 4 Fracas. My USS South Carolina and Steve Reynolds' HMS Invincible squared off against the

Pirate Smurf, Randy Stiponovich's VDT and Khallid Negron's SMS Ostfriesland. Both fleets jockeyed for position, as the battle was joined. After sortie #1, Steve and I realized that we were not going to score too many hits on the Osty, as it sits so low in the water and is covered in casemates. So we decided to focus on the Pirate Smurf, who seemed happy to have the attention. The battling was hard fought, but in the end, the Allies prevailed:

Steve Reynolds	42-2-4	670
Tim Krakowski	23-1-4	455
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1125</b>	

Luis Negron	4-1-0	65
Randy Stiponovich	74-30-23	2640
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2705</b>	

I believe the next battle of the day was the Cruiser battle – which is fast becoming a NATS tradition. This year's cruiser battle was the biggest one I've seen so far. 14 Captains with their cruisers answered the muster, as the Red fleet did battle with their much hated enemies, the Blue fleet. As you might imagine, this was a stern (to stern) affair. HA! I kill me. The battle started badly for the Blue fleet, as Dallas Fluegal's Karlsruhe went dead in the water and had to declare. Blue captains Matthew “Viper” Clarke, Kas



One on One battlers don't pick sides, they shoot them!



Photos supplied by Bob Hoernemann

Gaigalas, and Chris Grossiant mounted a fierce counter attack with the rest of the Blue captains as the Blue fleet managed to fatally wound Graham “Rookie of the Year” Kozak’s Brooklyn in the second sortie. However, the day was carried by the Red as veterans Chris Pearce’s Le G-something, along with Admiral Bob’s Minneapolis and Chris Au’s Salt Lake City directed some impressive rookies, Joe Maxwell and Jon Roberts to victory. The final scores were:

Chris Grossaint	46-7-4	835
Dallas Fluegel	1-0-0 Sunk	810
David Au	2-1-0	45
John Bruder	8-0-0	80
Kas Gaigalas	31-3-2	485
Matthew Clarke	45-2-0	500
Patrick Clarke	16-6-3	460
Randy Stiponovich	31-1-1	385
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3600</b>	

Bob Hoernemann	57-1-2	695
Chris Au	20-4-1	350
Chris Pearce	21-0-0	210
Graham Kozak	29-0-0	290
Joe Maxwell	34-0-0	340
Jon Roberts	17-3-0	245
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2730</b>	

The first Crusier battle was such a success, that the Class 3 and below crowd decided to do it again!

Cruiser battle II pitted the Allies (Bob Hoernemann- USS Minneapolis, Chris Au – USS Salt Lake City, Chris Groissant – HMS Fiji, Chris Pearce, FNS Le Grounille, Kas Gaigalas - USS Brooklyn, Kevin Hovis - USS St. Louis, Matthew Clarke – USS Houston, and Patrick Clarke – USS San Juan) against the vastly outgunned Axis fleet (Bryan Finster – IJN Yahagi, Dave Au – IJN Isuzu, and Jeff Lide – IJN Sakawa). This is one of those battles I didn’t see first hand, but in the end the long lance torpedoes of the Japanese must have carried the day because the Axis managed to steal a victory by a measly 10 points (once you take the



Jon Roberts checks the plumbing on his Lutzow.

Photo by Steve Reichenbach

Sakawa’s ram penalty into account)!  
Bonzai!!!!

Bob Hoernemann	25-0-0	250
Chris Au	22-5-2	445
Chris Grossaint	17-1-0	195
Chris Pearce	2-1-0	45
Kas Gaigalas	9-2-0	140
Kevin Hovis	23-4-0	330
Matthew Clarke	22-1-1	295
Patrick Clarke	15-2-4 Sunk	800
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2500</b>	

Bryan Finster	18-5-6 sunk	1005
Dave Au	8-1-0	105
Jeff Lide	113-2-0	1180
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2290</b>	

Yours truly was once again approached to participate in a battle, the 6-5-4. Each fleet contained 1 ship of each class, and the Bruders had the unfortunate luck of drawing me to round out the Red fleet. We were paired against the Blue fleet of Kevin Bray, Admiral Bob, and Steve Reynolds. The fleets looked pretty equal on paper. How quickly that changed! As soon as war was called, I began by taking a few pot shots here and there while the fleets maneuvered. Then I saw my

opening. I rushed to get my haymaker on Admiral Bob’s Warspite. However, this maneuver exposed the South Carolina to Bob’s haymaker, which was scoring belows! Time slowed down. I remember Khallid screaming “Tim, get out of there!” But I was happily splashing my haymaker harmlessly next to the Warspite, while Bob was scoring below after below. As my pump lit off, I was reminded of some advice that Fluegal gave me only the day before. “I wouldn’t be so aggressive if I were you...” Hmmm. As the South Carolina slid beneath the waves, all I could do was watch as the Blue fleet pressed their advantage. The Bruders put up a valiant fight, but were unable to overcome the deficit I left them. The final tallies were:

Bob Hoernemann	65-5-25	2025
Kevin Bray	28-5-11	955
Steve Reynolds	34-2-6	690
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3670</b>	

John Bruder	63-11-16	1705
Josh Bruder	59-7-25	2015
Tim Krakowski	28-5-21 Sunk	2255
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5975</b>	

As the night fell, and I tried to dry out my (not-so) water tight box, the fleets gathered at the lake for the Wednesday night battle. Darkness comes late in the northern latitudes in summer, and we had to wait until almost 10 PM for war to be called. As I didn't have my ship ready to participate, I had a great view of... the blackness. The battle started slowly as each fleet probed the darkness searching for the enemy. There were several light displays that stood out, including John Bruder's Barham. John cut port holes in his ABS plastic (gotta get some of that stuff!) super structure and the Barham looked like a cruise ship at night. Another distinct light display was Patrick Clarke's USS Indiana. He roped a few colored glow in the dark rings over the superstructure so he could always tell his ship's orientation. Because it was one of the easiest to spot, I concentrated on the Indiana as she went cruising for trouble. It didn't take long before she found Lief Goodson's Bismark and soon the battle erupted. Both Patrick and Lief ferociously traded sidemounts, as the battle spiraled around. I couldn't make out much else, so I continued to focus on the Indiana as she tripled the Bismark. Not to be undone, Leif maneuvered the Bismark's haymaker on target and blasted away. Tim Becket (at least I think it was Tim) joined the

fracas, and soon the Indiana was in the middle of what can only be described as a target rich environment. As the battle died down, no one had sunk in the darkness and it was back to the hotel to tally the scores. As you can see below, once again the Axis ruled the night. And I have a bit of advice for Patrick. A veteran battler once told me "You might not want to be so aggressive."

**Allies**

Bob Hoernemann	2-0-0	20
Chris Grossaint	8-2-3	280
Chris Pearce	3-0-0	30
Dave Au	0-0-1	50
Joe Maxwell	0-0-0	0
John Bruder	0-0-0	0
Josh Bruder	17-3-10	745
Kevin Bray	8-3-12	755
Patrick Clarke	50-10-15	1500
Steve Reynolds	3-1-2	155
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3535</b>	

**Axis:**

Brian Lamb	11-0-0	110
Bryan Finster	0-0-0	0
D.W. Fluegel	2-0-2	120
Dallas Fluegel	0-0-0	0
Jeff Lide	0-0-0	0
Lief Goodson	31-1-4	535
Luis Negron	2-0-0	20
Mike Tanzillo	5-0-0	50
Tim Beckett	55-12-10	1350
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2185</b>	

There were several other 1 on 1s that were scored During NATS. Some even took place on Thursday and Friday! I guess now would be a good time to mention that I didn't actually witness all the battles, so I may have screwed up some of the facts. If I got something wrong, I apologize. See the scores below and ask the participants to spin their yarns.

**Admiral Death Match**

Bob Hoernemann	79-7-49	sunk	4415
Tim Beckett	13-7-30		1805

**Battle for 62 (Don't ask me about this one)**

Kevin Bray	14-0-8	540
Tim Krakowski	58-9-29	Sunk 3055

**Fiji vs Lutzow**

Chris Grossaint	11-1-0	125
Jon Roberts	32-3-7	745

**Friday Class 4**

Steve Reynolds	11-2-6	460
Randy Stiponovich	36-11-13	1285

**Friday Cruiser**

Matthew Clarke	2-0-0	20
Andrew Bruce	4-0-0	40

**Olde Clarke vs Young Bruder**

Patrick Clarke	11-1-1	185
Josh Bruder	13-2-3	330

**PB & J**

Josh Bruder	28-4-9	830
Kevin Bray	16-8-32	1960

**Sodak Duel**

Kevin Bray	8-0-2	180
Patricke Clarke	19-7-7	715

**Tanzillo Vs Bruder**

Josh Bruder	21-2-0	260
Mike Tanzillo	23-5-14	1055

**Thursday Duel**

Steve Reynolds	26-2-3	460
Randy Stiponovich	20-18-13	1300



Some captains brought their own trees to lean against.



## Thursday at Nats

by Bob Hoernemann



This morning I felt much more relaxed as I finally felt the NATS had been won. Chris

Au put his Allied Jap battle cruiser on the shelf because it had started to warp. Today he brought his French battle cruiser to play with. He was thinking about going Axis this morning but Tim B told him to stay Allied. I wondered why Tim did that but soon found out. Since they felt NATS was lost they put together a list of targets and Chris was at the top. Josh Bruder was next in line, then Chris Grossaint. They were going to sink the captains on the list at all cost.

### Thursday AM fleet battle:

Both sides were without one ship as Andy Ray and John Roberts were still having new ship blues. The first sortie of the morning battle started with the Axis chasing Chris around the pond out by the rope line. Chris would run his ship through the slow Allied ships and the Axis would willingly follow him absorbing bbs for their trouble. Mike T had a pump problem halfway into the sortie and sank with light damage. Steve R's Gneisenau concentrated too much on Chris and left himself open for a ton of damage and a sink. Late in the sortie I found myself next to Finster's haymaker and felt very lucky he was out and did not shoot me. Turns out he had bbs left but I was not on the list.

Early in the sortie I got my haymaker into the side of Randy's VDT. In between sorties he told me to come over and look at all the damage I caused. I told him I was sure I didn't shoot at him at all and it must have been another QE. He said "If it wasn't you then it was some other ship with a psycho bear on its top". He had about 20 hole on and below in a little 2 inch area. This started off my day quite well.

By the second sortie we knew that Chris was the main target. We wanted the Axis to pay for the sink if they were going to try and get it.

The Bismarcks took off after Chris Au right way. They were chasing him before battle even started. Again Chris did a loop around the pond running through the Allied slow ships. This let Kevin Bray block Finster's Nagato and triple it. All 40+ ship were playing follow the leader with Chris. Finally the Axis blocked him and made him back up. This caused a big fur ball right in front of center most campaign port. John Bruder got several good haymakers into Dirty. Kevin, Josh and Steve also blasted him. Dirty had lost his drive and declared just as this got brutal.

Meanwhile, Chris is still running the loop. He was pumping really hard but did not stop. The Axis keep after him and keep taking damage. Leif calls five and Dirty calls man in the water to get his still floating ship, Leif does not make it off five and sinks next to shore. The Axis still have not given up the Chris chase. While making another pass John Bruder and I take team stern guns into Brian Lamb. At long last the Axis get Chris to slow down, but a Nagato rams him. It takes a while for Chris to bring it in and check it as he was out by the rope line. He tips his ship around to check for damage and puts it back in the water. As he backs away the mighty battle cruiser finally goes under.

After Chris sank the Axis started looking for the next victim. Finster and Lide chased after Kas' Brooklyn and then went after Chris G's NC. The Allies found Brian Lamb to be hurt. Chris P and I side mounted Brian then John Buder took the haymaker to him. Then I got a haymaker on him too and Lamb was sunk.

Finster, Lide and Flugel still had enough bbs left to almost put John Bruder under. As John was trying to get his ship his radio was put into

reverse and the ship started to back away from him. John had to go up to his shorts to catch his ship but did not sink.

### Thursday Campaign:

I love campaign and this was my best battle ever. The captains again held a vote to see if we would have an hour or longer battle. Most people were tired enough that the one hour campaign won this time. I was very surprised that no one knew about my "Q" carrier trick on Tuesday. So we were going to do the same thing again today. Josh Bruder wanted to stay off the water at the start of campaign because he knew he was on "The List".

Fifteen minutes before battle Tim B came over and said "I need to ask you some personal questions about your carriers." He said he had heard that one of them was a warship and wanted to know which one it was. I told him that it was the one with the blue top (They all had blue tops). After a few laughs from the people standing around (Tim B, Tim K, Steve Renyolds and Kevin Bray) I took the top off of the "Q" carrier. Tim looked it over for any differences he could find between it and its convoy cousin. There weren't any you could see from more than a few feet. I asked Tim how the he found out and was told an interesting story of two room mates.

The Axis one was bragging how he shot up a poor CVL Tuesday. So the Allied one told him that he wasted his bbs shooting at a warship; just as he said it he knew he had let the cat out of the bag.

Wednesday I had changed my channel in the Minneapolis to 76 (No one was on it) so I could use her while someone else had the CVL. Bruce Bloom and Steve Reynolds took out the CVLs and Tim K again took out the "Q" carrier. Rick King was the only Axis down there to try and stop us. He asked and we showed him which one the "Q"

carrier was (The one with the blue top).

As they were getting close to the end of the 30 second sea room time Tim K lined up the “Q” carrier right behind Rick and Steve called off 30 seconds. Rick lit up the pour carrier like a Christmas tree. We all laughed a little as Rick pulled away and I told him he had wasted his bbs on a warship. Rick did not care. “I can hardly see that far out, I’ll be lucky if I hit him at all.”

I left the CVLs on their run and went to shoot targets with Matt Clarke, Chris P. and Kevin Hovis. Leif was there blocking targets but could not stop all of us. We knocked down about half of them and then got Leif out in the open. Kevin and I were on one side and Chris P and Matt were on the other. Leif just sat there and we finished off our bbs and all went on five. Leif latter sank (I was told he forgot to turn on his pump) guarding the targets. Matt, Kevin and I all went to the forward base to come off five and reload.

On my way over there I saw Steve’s little sub. A couple of Allied ships were trying to shoot it. I drove by it twice letting it bounce in my wake and it sank.

Just as I was getting bbs loaded I saw a Mark Roe convoy heading out. Kevin Hovis had dropped his St Louis and put a big hole in her side so he was getting the Big Mo ready.

Matt was still getting bbs loaded so I went out alone. I backed up almost to the rope line and right next to the convoy ship. Unguarded she was an easy target and I shot about half of my bbs at her (She sank).

Then I saw a black freighter and could not remember if it was ours or not. Someone told me it was Axis so I shot the rest of my bbs at her (She sank coming back). I called five and went to reload again. As this was going on both of our CVLs had completed a run and started another (One made it both times, the other was left at the forward base the second time). The “Q” carrier sank early in the first run. It did not have a lot of damage and Tim K said the pumps did not turn on (The trim tab had been bumped).

Chris G had his LST running around like mad (He made 4 complete runs). Finster had the Tokyo Express out for a complete run. Now about halfway into campaign Josh Bruder came out and was pounced on. He said he gave as much as he had but was out numbered and sank. Graham’s Brooklyn and Finster’s Sakawa (Run by Jeff) also sank. Since I had taken the Minneapolis out and got off the water so fast I left the same battery in. This was not smart; I have lots of them and should have changed it. I came out to find the giant Europa making a run. I got a few long range

shots at her then got too close and was hit with a push call (She made it forward but was left there). Then I ran down to the targets, shot down one and shot at the Axis guarding them. I called five and was waiting it out, talking on the radio again, when I heard some bad things. That would be Finster double sidemounts. He had hurt me when I was not looking (He warned me Tuesday) and I could not get away. The battery was dying and I sank with less than a minute left.

I grabbed the Warspite and was headed back out. I found John Roberts listing Lutzow and put a few sterns and some prop wash into him. He had a lot of time left on his five and didn’t look good so I left (He sank) to chase a convoy ship. Right by the port Doug Hunt and I both came clear and blasted it with sterns. He made it into port but had to stay there. I went back to the targets and found five still standing. Dirty, Fluegel and Luis were guarding them with Finster coming in once and a while. All of us kept getting stuck in the weeds and had several moss checks. I kept telling Dirty that he should move so I could get that target. But he was on a mission and wouldn’t move. I came in with sidemounts, trying not to take his or any of the others. The turning point was when Chris P brought his NC over and tossed a few sterns at him. Then he started with the prop washing. Dirty finally moved, he got about 10’ and sank. I had one chance at the targets but was out of sterns.

Meanwhile Kevin Bray made a complete run with an LST that had no drive. Pat Clarke tug boated him there and back. Tim K made a complete freighter run for the Allies. Steve R made a run with Altmark.. Jeff and Finster shared a complete run with the Tokyo Express. Mark Roe made a forward with one of the Rainbow Fleet. That was campaign, my best battle ever



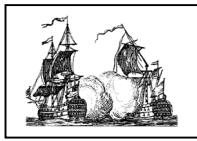
The Axis Merchant Fleet

Photo by Steve Reichenbach



## Friday at Nats

by Lars



Let me be up front about this report. I was **not** at Nats. Neither

was I privileged to see a video from the event. The basis of this report on Friday's events comes from the score sheets and from PPB satellite photos. Plus I ate some bad mushrooms right before I wrote it.

**Fleet Battle 5** was a rarity, a battle for all the marbles. Marbles are popular in Michigan.

The Allied fleet was flexing its muscle with 18 captains meeting the call to battle. The Axis countered with 15 stalwart souls, leaving Dirty Dave and Luis Negron on the bench, plotting ahead for next year's campaign.

As is usual for a Nats Friday battle, there was nothing to hold back, as the next big battle was a year away. After a week of tentatively feeling each other out, the weary battlers rejected subtlety, intrigue, and strategy. This was to be a slugfest of gargantuan proportions. The Axis in their best Samurai tradition waded into the hail of Allied gunfire with the idea that the center of battle was the best place to hit something and pick up points.

The Allied fleet, in exchange, decided that an enraged bull will chase its tormenter to its own detriment, and sent in Chris Grossaint's NC into the maw of the enemy to sting some of the Samurai pride. His NC sailed into striking distance during which time he said something in French, which always has a tendency to raise the Axis' ire. Chris repeated a line from the once-popular comedian Steve Martin, yelling out, "Omlette du flomage". I think the Axis misheard it as 'Du mind your plumage'. As they hate all things frilly, the Axis concentration of strength and fire turned into a drawn-out chase of the

extremely pesky NC, which took great delight in dragging the whole Axis fleet behind it past the Allied guns.

Despite the growing carnage on the water, the captains mixed it up on shore as well, but there they were sparring to see who could be more civil to each other. "Watch out for my sterns!", "Sorry for blocking your way!" and "Get a little closer and those aboves will become belows!"

When the first sortie had finished, the Allied fleet remained intact, while Bryan Finster's Nagato (57-5-16) and Steve Reichenbach's Gneisenau (110-17-38) each pulled out their Wicked Witch of the West routines and melted beneath the waves.

In the second sortie the Axis swarm set out after Grossaint's NC when battle was called. The NC set out to circle away from the Allied fleet to draw in her pursuers, so that the NC could then circle back and drag the Axis through the Allied gauntlet.

In the meantime, Kas Gaigalas's USS Brooklyn was momentarily stuck on one of the few tree roots which was close to the surface. In a rookie mistake, the cruiser had caught a half-dozen sidemount shots that had scored belows, and while waiting for battle to start, Kas had turned off the pump and the ship had settled, and become stuck. When an Allied captain asked him why he wasn't moving, an Axis overheard and passed the word. The Axis fleet, always a well-oiled machine in the most trying battles, then dropped their pursuit of Grossaint and executed the most perfect battle turn-away since Jutland.

Now Kas is a knowledgeable naval historian and was overwhelmed by this sight, and the flustered rookie exclaimed in response, "Well, I DO DECLARE!"

Quick as a whip (most Axis are, except when it comes to insults from the French), Axis spectator and Site host Luis Negron waded out and

recovered Kas's ship and he was officially out of the battle as a declared sink with a hit tally of 30-1-6.

Now for the second fluke, the Axis fleet executed a second battle turn-away (again just like Jutland) to resume the chase of Grossaint's NC. Unfortunately, Kevin Bray's Massachusetts, which had been largely ignored at this point, was rushing to Kas's aid. The Axis fleet swirling around him on all sides caused his pump to have an adrenaline surge and then seize solid. The Massachusetts hiccuped twice and then rolled over and sank (12-2-1) in the Axis whirlpool.

This sudden sinking of two Allies right off the bat stunned the Allies into thoughtful silence on the pertinacity of fate, and so they did not thus repeat their helpful and cheerful suggestions of the first sortie, except once late in the sortie when Don Cole suggested to Dallas Fluegel that parking the Baden under the Alabama's sidemount was not a good thing for his side.

The pursuit of Grossaint resumed after the soggy Massachusetts exited stage right. The three big German ships, Brian Lamb's Bismarck, Tim Beckett's Bismarck, and Lief Goodson's Tirpitz led the charge. Grossaint, the sacrificial lamb, kept charging back and forth through the Allied pack dogs (Bob Hoernemann's Warspite, Dave Au's Queen Elizabeth, and Patrick Clarke's Indiana) while the Axis swarm followed. There were so many shots flying that the Allied ships took heavy damage (Warspite: 35-7-27, Queen Elizabeth: 17-7-15, Indiana: 34-3-11). Grossaint's ship finally gave up the fight, and slipped beneath the waves while trying to turn to make another run through the pack dogs. She went down with a tally of 126-12-43. The three big Germans stopped for a moment to cheer "BONZAI", and the sound of their mighty cheer fractured the remaining balsa in their hulls and all

three sank almost simultaneously, with scores of: Lamb: 140-20-56, Goodson: 170-4-27, Beckett: 95-13-48.

Having suffered a triple tragedy, the remaining Axis were momentarily stunned and demoralized, but then they heard what they assumed was Kevin Hovis laughing. In reality, Kevin was suffering from the alien Michigan pollen, and he was trying to wheeze it out of his system. In any case, this set the remaining Axis in pursuit of his Missouri. The Missouri, which is built like a billboard and turns almost as well, made a good replacement sacrificial lamb. Kevin had learned well from Chris, and tried to keep running through the Allied pack dogs while the Axis pit bulls hung on his heels. The only thing the Missouri does well (besides shoot 7 guns) is run in a straight line, and she suffered little damage in her runs, but was punished heavily (68-7-11) whenever she took a quarter-hour to turn around. The most tenacious of the Axis pit bulls were Jeff Lide's Kirishima, D.W. Fluegel's Karlsruhe, and Mike Tanzillo's Scharnhorst. But when the Karlsruhe succumbed to a 16-2-5 hit tally, followed ten minutes later by Tanzillo's 95-11-13 tally, the other Axis captains started to lose interest in the big fish and began to notice the smaller Allied piranhas all around them. They gradually peeled

off and began defending themselves in the more standard Axis fashion. The old Admiral from 2004, still flush with victory, refused to give up the chase of the Missouri. Only when his Kirishima's bow began to rise, and the still churning stern powered under the waves with a tally of 85-7-29, did he pause to reconsider his tactics amid a string of lengthy "BONZAIs!" from his teammates in his honor.

By this time the Allied piranhas had exhausted the bulk of their ammo, which allowed the six remaining Axis to score some decent points which brought some semblance of balance back to this Allied blowout victory.

Well, this ended the official fleet fighting for the week, and as folks packed up their gear they laughed and snickered about things that had happened during the week and in anticipation of what they planned to do next year.

The fleet tallies for the week are below:

Battle	Allies	Axis
Monday AM	28890	20300
Monday PM	28665	21745
Tuesday AM	24045	18065
Tuesday Cam.	16050	10325
Wed. Nite	2185	3535
Thursday AM	27535	16370
Thursday Cam.	16550	9225
Friday AM	32740	16935
<b>Total:</b>	<b>176660</b>	<b>116500</b>

Well, I hope that when the historical revisionist version of the battle comes out, that it is closer to the truth than this one (which wouldn't be hard to do.)

In the meantime, the awards banquet took place. A good meal and hearty applause will always bring around the most balky battler, and that was the case again this year. The award winners were, as reported by Kevin Hovis:

**Best of:**

- Class 2:** Dallas Fluegel
- Class 3:** Joe Maxwell
- Class 4:** Steve Reynolds
- Class 5:** Bob Hoernemann
- Class 6:** Josh Bruder
- Class 7:** Kevin Hovis
- Individual Combat:** Kevin Bray
- Lifeline:** Chris Grossaint  
(6 complete runs)

**Best Of Scale Warship:**

Steve Reichenbach

**Best of Scale Convoy:**

Tim Krakowski

- Most Feared Axis:** Tim Beckett
- Most Feared Allied:** Chris Pearce
- Best Dressed:** Jeff Lide
- Most Damaged:** Brian Lamb  
20,335 total points
- Founders Trophy:** Kevin Bray
- Rookie of the Year:** Graham Kozak
- Sportsmanship:** Tim Beckett

And of course, Axis Admiral Tim Beckett presented Allied Admiral Bob Hoernemann with the ceremonial admiral's sword, and all the Axis marbles. I'm told the marbles numbered about four or five, because the Axis consider playing for marbles to be real childish, and so they don't invest in them to the extent that Allied battlers do.

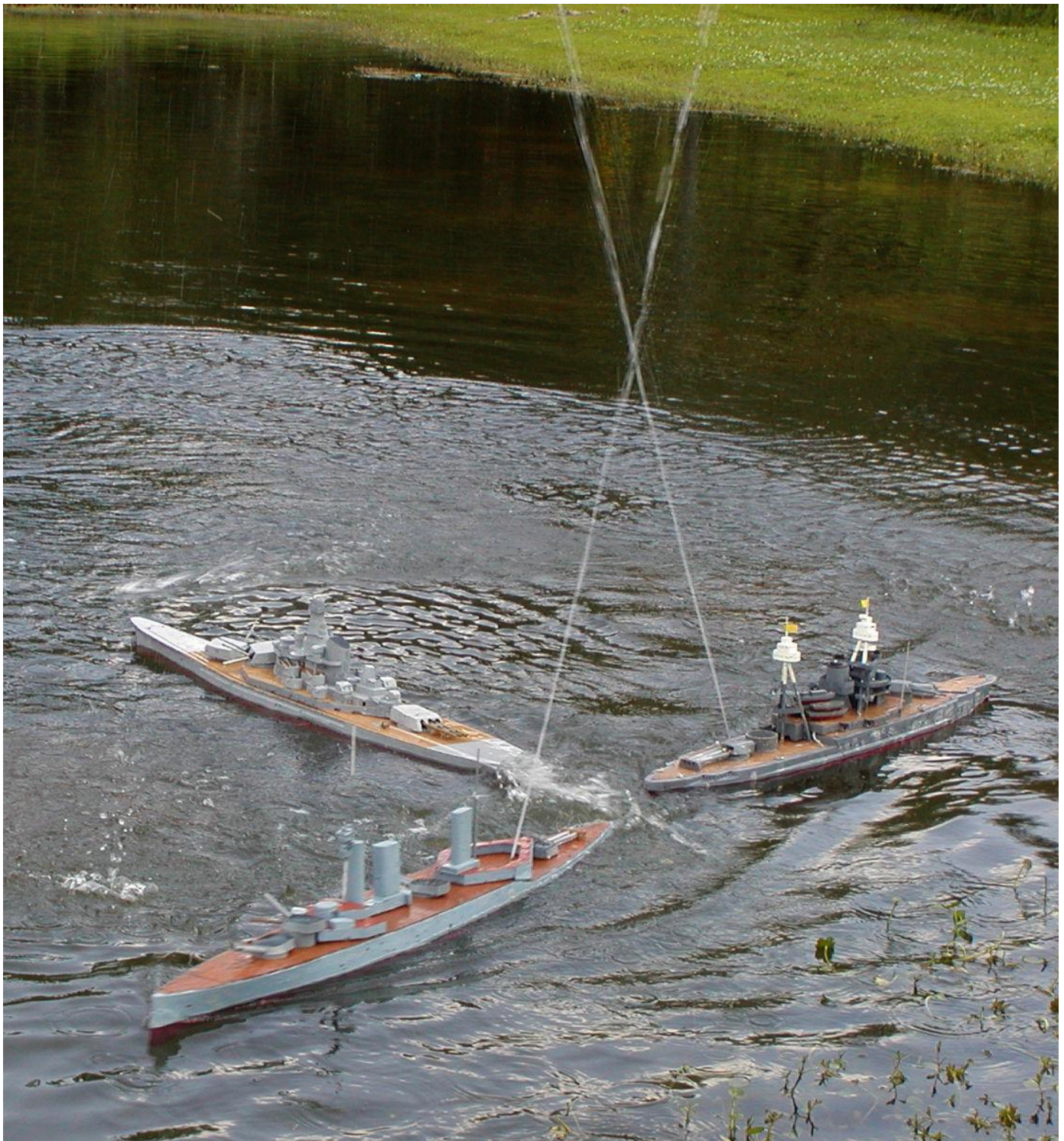
Well, that's about all the fibs I can muster on this batch of mushrooms while still sticking to the limited facts I have (which comes out to a rather lengthy list when one considers the scores individually).



Brian Lamb's Bismarck BB Magnet

Photo by Steve Reichenbach

## Photo of the Year



I got this photo from Peter Kunisch, along with the note below:

*If you have room, add a few words to this photo that Georgi took at the February battle this year. It is a photographer's dream, the one in a thousand that comes out just right and not at all what one expects but much better. The USS Alabama is Don Cole's saluted by Frank Falango's USS Arizona and Terry Miller's HMS Lion.*

Well, Peter, I've tried to come up with a slogan about 'Crossing their T's' and "X marks the Spot" and even "Dotting the I's", but somehow I think that the photo stands alone and that you have already said it all.

Photo by Georgi Kunisch

## A Word from Graham Kozak (The rookie of the year!)



It wasn't until I was trying to explain this hobby to one of my friends several days after NATS that I realized just how unique Model Warship Combat is. When surrounded by a bunch of great people who think that building boats with the intent to sink them is an excellent and perfectly normal way to pass time, you forget that not everybody out there has the ability, wherewithal, and just the right amount of craziness to actually do it. Sure it may not be as popular as flying RC planes or racing boats, but as far as I am concerned, that only makes it better. And the incredulous stares you get when attempting to explain it just add to the enjoyment.

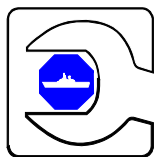
I got to meet people from all over the country who share the same interests, and based on the camaraderie at NATS it's obvious that this is a very tight-knit group. Despite the fact that this was not only my first NATS but also one of my first battles, everybody made me feel like part of the group. I got a lot of advice (not all of it conflicting) and even sinking was fun. Within moments of pulling my ship out of the water, a small crowd was offering me assistance and helping me get everything back on line.

All in all, NATS was one of the most interesting and fun things I have done in recent recollection, and being awarded Rookie of the Year really topped off an already great week. I look forward to seeing all of you again one of these years, perhaps when I am old enough to get to NATS without dragging my parents along too.



## How to Install Toothpaste Water Channeling

by Steve Reichenbach



Some time ago, I experimented with different water channeling techniques. It was the day after the medical benefits lecture at work, and I found myself with a free table of toothpaste. Hmm, toothpaste I thought. How wonderful, I can use that for quick and easy water channeling! That's how the fun began. Follow these steps to repeat my wonderful experiment, to fill the cavities of your ship:

- 1) Start with a clean hull bottom. Ensure there is no dust or debris in the hull.

- 1) Purchase toothpaste for the water channeling. You will need about 4 tubes of toothpaste for a 3-unit ship, and add another 2 tubes of toothpaste for every additional unit. Avoid toothpaste with gel (like AquaFresh). You want the regular toothpaste – Colgate seems to work best, and will give your ship a fresh minty scent!

- 1) Install a form into which you will pour the toothpaste. I like to use popcycle sticks down the length of

the hull, to form a channel about 1.5 inches wide that will not be filled with toothpaste.

- 1) Squeeze the toothpaste into a blender. You will want to use no more than 4 tubes at a time in a 1/2 gallon size blender.



- 1) Add an equal volume of micro-balloons to the blender. If you don't have micro-balloons, baby powder will work.

- 1) Add 1 cup of water

- 1) Mix on high speed for 2 minutes

- 1) Pour the toothpaste slurry into the form within the hull. Allow to sit overnight until the surface becomes hardened.

- 1) Cut out a 1/32" thick piece of balsa to cover the top of the water channel. This gives your water channel that "wood look".

- 1) Coat the surface of the water channeling with epoxy. I like to use West Systems.

- 1) Allow epoxy to dry

- 1) Weigh your ship. You now are seriously over weight, and you list to the side with more toothpaste in it, so gut the ship and try again with balsa wood, foam, or some other method. :o)



## Screwy Captains at Nats: Photos by Steve Reichenbach



Doug Hunt searches for his favorite screwdriver.  
(It's in your other hand!)



Site Host Luis Negrón screws the bb ammo into the magazines one at a time.



Kevin Hovis dips his screwdrivers in Diet Coke for that perfect grip, Admiral Tim seeks the surrender of all Allied Screwdrivers, and Jeff Lide is timing how long he can elevate his screwdriver at eye level with his mind powers.



Mark Roe: I'd never find my screwdriver if I didn't tie my timer to it.



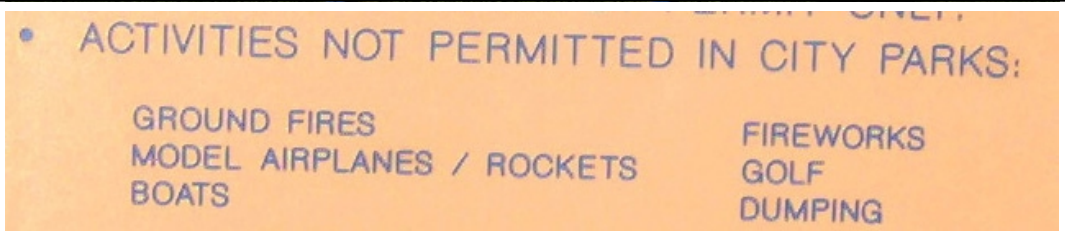
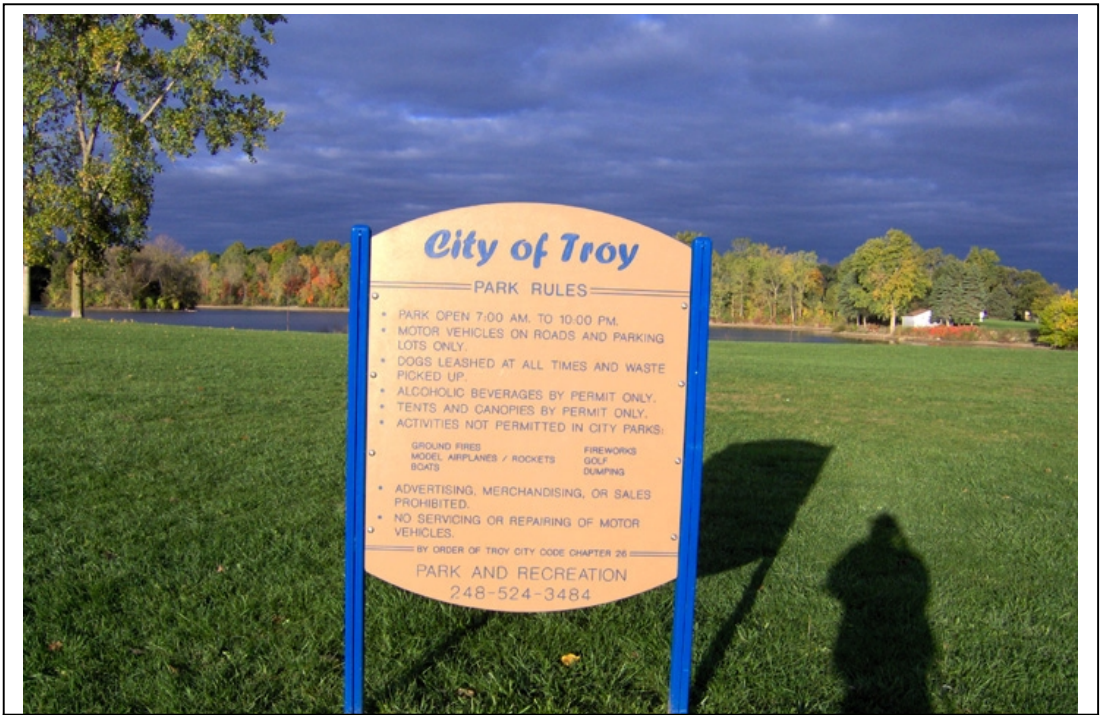
Matt Clarke: My dad says I'm not old enough for screwdrivers, so I'm stuck doing the dope.

**A Picture's worth a thousand Words**  
by Mark Roe

Subtitle: welcome to suburbia.

The sign is 71 inches tall and 47 inches wide, made of anodized aluminum. From 1999 to 2003 this is where I went to practice with my ships. Then magically one day this massive sign popped out of the ground.

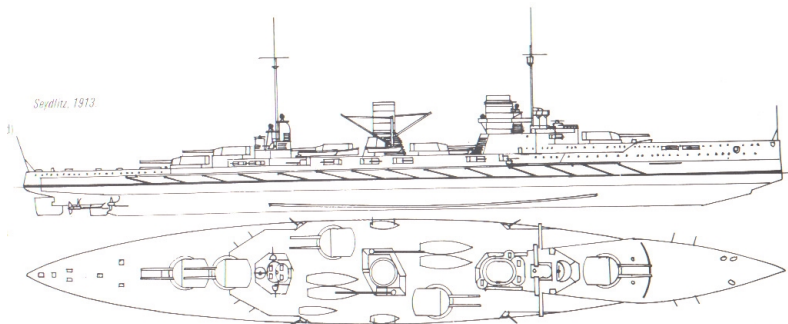
Notice the "no golf" rule. This city park with a 4.5 acre lake is next door to a city owned golf course. The water from the lake is used to water the golf course.



Photos by Mark Roe

**TASK FORCE 144**

1486 Oakdale Ave.  
West St. Paul, MN 55118



"Without a decisive Naval Force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious"  
- President George Washington