Battle of the Sea

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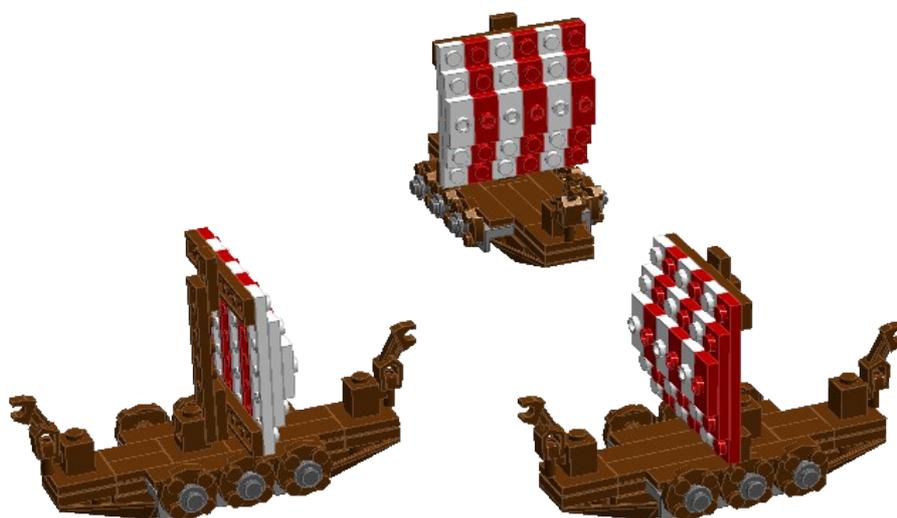
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Introduction

In 2004, the publishing house WizKids released the Battle Game Pirates CSG (constructible Strategy Game). In the simplest terms, it relies on building a fleet of ships of different nations, supplying them with adequate staff and... of course, gaining loot treasures in the form of both islands laboriously digging and attacking enemy ships which were carrying such treasures. Unfortunately WizKids stopped further development of the game, which is slowly sinking into oblivion.

Inspired by that game that I really liked this time and "armed" with the rules of BrikWars, I decided to make my own game with main theme of seafight battles, using LEGO bricks.

As this is the tabletop game, you have to prepare a table for it – typical 35 x 35 inches (about 90 x 90 cm) small table is enough to play that game, but of course if you want to have bigger ocean – you need bigger table. According to that, the ship models have to be created in microscale. Of course, you can try to play in minifig scale with really big ships, as the rules does not prohibit it, but they were prepared with the concept of rather smaller creations. Microscale also means that you can not avoid some simplifications and symbolism, on the one hand to make the game more fluid, on the other hand over command climate pirate fleet.

Each game is in main core the battle between fleets of ships, or the individual units of a certain number of points on the archipelago of islands. In the following chapters, I will present the principles of both creating fleets of ships and rules of moving, fighting and playing. In the future plans as appendixes are additional propositions of playing (scenarios), some more possibilities (winds, forts and ports, sea monsters etc.), so if you like such games be my guest.

Basic rules

Basic principles, aims to familiarize players with the mechanics of the game and allow to play the basic scenario - "To the last drop of blood", with their own fleet. Before the start of the game you should agree with other players on the level of the game – as example 50 points. In this amount of points each player's fleet should fit, whether it will be a long one unit... or 5 small, remains the choice of each of the players, but the findings regarding the number of units, are also possible. In the easiest way – the sum of the ships length in your fleet should be 50 or less points – if you decided to play in such amount of points. Of course you can create big fleet even for 1000 points if you just have enough bricks and really big table to play.

Following a similar principle as amount of points, you can refine the rules regarding the construction of ships, for example: Limited only to the Middle Ages or the times of pirates in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of course, today's or future conflicts are also possible to map. The rules presented below are a backbone of the battle system, which can be further expanded in more scenarios (eg. Transport of gold, the defense of the fort etc.) and the environmental elements (ability to play the monsters of the sea, the influence of winds and ocean currents etc.). This is just a handful of examples and ideas that can multiply and grow.

Elements which you need to play

The game "Battle of the Sea", requires a few props. Each can be constructed from LEGO, but of course you can use your own items, if available. Elements presented in the pictures are for illustration only.

Dices

To play in "Battle of the Sea" you have to prepare specific type of dice, which is presented in the picture on the right site. It consists of a fairly common block size of 2 x 2 studs, and a Plate modified 2 x 2 studs with groove and 1 stud in center (Jumper). Tests with these "dices" are made according to the following rule:
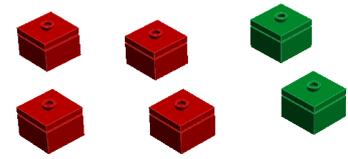
- if the dice stand on the side, in any way - we have succeeded.

- if the cube is lying "top side", or turns upside down - we have failure.

Total amount of successes is our score in one throw of dices.

As an exception, you can also use regular 6 side dices. Depending on the mood for an appropriate level of difficulty, you can then take that success is the ejection of 4 or more points, or a success to treat 3 or more points, but in the description of the system will be assumed to use "dedicated dices" described above. It is only important to the entire game that all the players are using the dices of the same type.

Ruler

The basic unit of distance in a "Battle of the Sea" is inch. This is because of the practicality of this measure in nearly all battle games and ease of mapping it in LEGO bricks, because 1 inch is worth approximately 3 studs. As a result, we only need one technic liftarm 1 x 15 studs to get comfortable, 5 inch ruler. The picture on the right shows a folding ruler with length of 10 inches (30 studs). As you can see does not present any difficulty the further expansion, although ruler longer than 15 inches rather don't be needed.
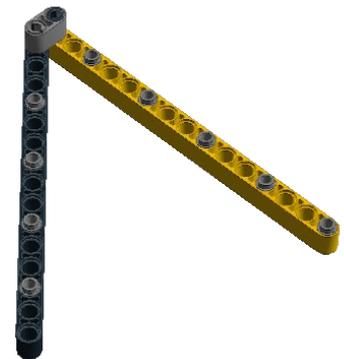
Sextant

In fact the typical sextant (protractor A mirror) is a device primarily intended for optical measurements of celestial bodies in the sky, but it can also be used to measure horizontal and vertical angles between objects on the ground. In our game, we will use a very simplified version, with which we will mainly examine whether with our unit we can perform accurate ramming an enemy unit or not. About the ramming, more you can read in the chapter about the fight, and an example of "sextant" designed to measure 90° angle is presented on the right site. The measurement takes place from the bow of the vessel, or the end of the basement of the vessel, as is shown.
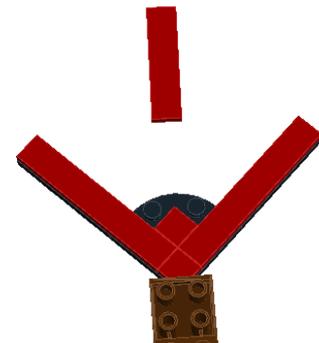
Markers

Cones, round plates 1 x 1 (called peas) and other small LEGO bricks assists in the effective management of our fleet. They are useful in larger quantities in the colors red, green and blue, but other colors you should have too, for the unambiguous identification of vessels, etc.
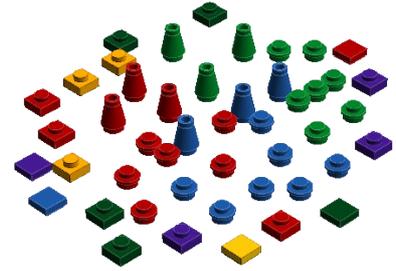
Models of the ships

It depends on the players how exactly ship models map the real ships. Of course, playing ships miniatures in such game is much nicer than just the long plate, but it is an individual matter. The system is designed as a core rules so in extreme cases you can even play multicolored plates as a ships.

Ship card

To maintain functionality with the size of the microscale, their characteristics must be shown outside of it. To accomplish this, **each vessel participating in the game, has "flag"on the stern**, clearly identifying it, and in the case of more similar ships, should determine the color of each fleet ahead of time, eg., assuming that the one player color will always be red and the plates under it, are "identifier ship", another players has black on the top etc.
The "ship card" is created on a plate 4 x 4 studs, as is shown on the picture on the right. **The upper right corner of the plate is marked as "flag ship"**, and the remaining blocks correspond to the characteristics. The "cone" is worth 5 points and "peas" 1 point. In this way, we can minimize the number of bricks without losing their flexibility and facilitating each count.
The point value of the vessel is calculated by measuring the total length of it, as is shown in the illustration. This are our base points, according to which we create its characteristics. The rules allows you to create a variety of units, depending on your preference and fight scenario, and even ships which looks like the same, can have very different characteristics on their "ship card". At the same time we are able to maintain a certain "scale" between large and small units. Presented viking style ship has a length of 12 studs, so we have 12 points to divide.
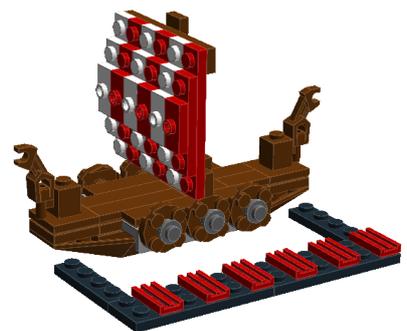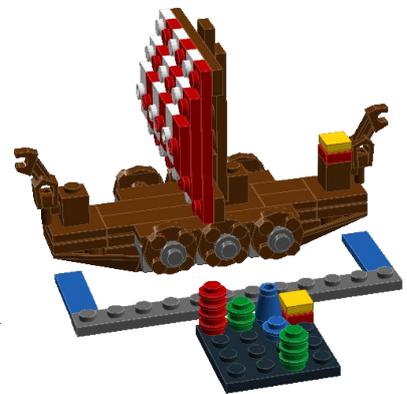
Each unit has 3 main features. As example, vessel with a length of 12 studs (from the stern to the bow) may have statistics like below:

- **Fire Power (red color)** - 4 (4 beans)

- **Durability (green)** - 5 (2 beans for base durabililty and 3 beans as the half of the speed – look below for detailed description)

- **Speed (blue)**, in inches (3 studs) - 6 (1 cone and 1 bean)

As can be seen the sum of base characteristics is 12 points (4 + 2 + 6), a total length of the ship. Since rapid unit it is harder to hit, half of the speed is their extra durability - the durability, obtained from the speed of the ship is in combat removed first, before any other injuries.

Firepower

Firepower is value, with which vessel is able to attack the enemy units. The default distance at which you can give a shot by ranged weapon is 10 inches (about 30 studs). If the ship's firepower is a multiple of 5, it is assumed that it can have long-range weapon. This weapon is able to effectively shoot at distance up to 15 inches. Detailed use of weapons will be described in the relevant chapter.
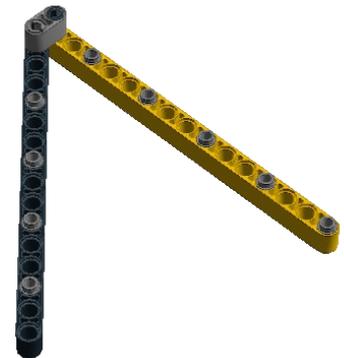
Durability

Durability is the amount of damage which the hull of the ship can achieve. If the durability drops to 0, the ship sinks. Durability consists of two parts - the first is the basic durability which is determined from the available points, a second additional durability is counted from the speed of the ship. This distinction is important, it has an impact on the determination of the damage on the unit in combat. Additional durability is calculated by dividing the initial speed of the vessel by 2 (rounded down).
Example: Ship which have 3 points of speed, has additional durability worth 1.

Speed

Speed is responsible for... the speed of your vessel. The amount of points on it is the maximum number of inches at which you can move your unit in one turn. One inch is approximately worth 3 studs on the blocks, so you can without any problem, use the LEGO ruler similar to example presented in the figure next to, created from 3 technic liftarms and some half-pins.

Capacity – optional feature

If for some reason will be necessary to add as fourth feature capacity, it can be assumed that the maximum capacity of the vessel is equal to its current durability. A ship laden with the basic durability value, does not lose speed (in our example 2 points). The ship which uses the payload with additional durability, losing as much speed as many points the rate of capacity use. If the load exceeds the sum of the current durability of the vessel, the ship has to get rid of part of the cargo, or sink.
Example: Our ship has to take the treasures of the weight of 4 units. Its maximum capacity is 5 units, including 2 of the basic durability. This means that can load without loss of speed 2 units and the other two units affects its speed by slowing the rate of 6 inches to 4. When it was travelling, it was attacked and lose two points durability so the maximum load capacity will be 3 units (2 base + 1 additional durability). This means that the ship must throw overboard one of the treasures or just sink. In return, the ship gets a little speed more - 5 inches, so it have a chance to run out. Of course if the captain decide to overboard two trasures, the ship can move with the full speed of 6 inches.

Moving the vessels

The speed of the vessels, depends on the number of points assigned to them on the ship card. One point equals one inch of movement. The image below illustrates the movement of the unit with a speed of 6 inches (blue cone gives 5 points, blue pea gives 1 point).

As you can see to the site of contact ship with the ground is applied ruler, and then 6 inches are measured (the half-pin is inserted into the ruler on every third hole, to easier count inches) and the unit is moved a certain distance. This is the maximum distance over which this unit can be moved in one round if additional rules do not specify otherwise. During the movement the ruler can be manipulated in any way, take turns and twists. The only restrictions are the inability to flow through the obstacle (island, reef, another vessels - your own or foreign, etc.).

Battle at the sea

During sea battles, you can attack your opponent by using two methods - fire, from a distance or by ramming. To determine the result of the attack the dices described in the previous section are used. The general rule is that we throw an appropriate amount of such "dices" and if one of them standing on the side, the cannonball / arrow / missile etc. reached the target. On the right image is an example of the "dices", which you should prepare for the ship with firepower 4 and base durability 2.
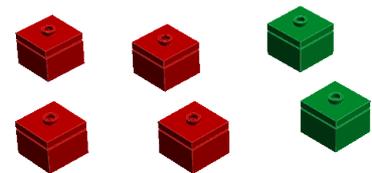
Damage

If the roll is successful, the opponent receives damage that should be noted on the ship. If the vessel has an additional durability, it is removed in the first place, with all the consequences (eq. loss of load). When additional durability is reduced to 0, the commander of attacked unit may take any decision on removing other markers from arbitrarily selected features of the unit - can be either speed, firepower and base durability. A vessel which does not have the speed is not able to move and is doomed to drift under the sea currents (or wind). A ship which does not have the firepower is not able to attack the enemy from a distance. An unit which does not have the base durability - sinking.

Firing

By creating the "ship card", some points can be spent on firepower. Its amount determine how many of "dices" we can use to attack another ship from the distance. There are two possible options - either stand on the side of the dice, then shot is succeed, or state wide side - then shot is missed.

The maximum range of fire from a standard weapon is 10 inches (30 studs). However, if a ship has the firepower of a size 5 or a multiple of 5, it is assumed that it has the "long-range" weapon on board, meaning that it can take a shot at a distance of 15 inches (45 studs). Number of shots from that is appropriate to the number of multiples of 5 (or simpler amount of cones on "ship card")

The example on the right site shows the effect of the damage made by a ship with firepower 4. As you can see, the two shots reached the target (dice is lying on the side) and two failed (dice is lying flat and upside down).

NOTE: When you are firing, you can choose to attack on any number of units within range, separating respectively firepower. The decision to which units you are attack and how much firepower you use on each of them, you have to declare before rolling the dices.
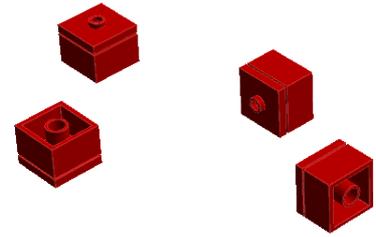
Ramming

Ramming is an attack that requires a combination of motion and weight of the vessel, but to be effective bow of the ship should hit as perpendicularly as possible into enemy unit. Because the vessels don't turn in place and the ramming is an extension of move, the attack can be distinguished into two types - accurate ramming and inaccurate ramming.

Accurate ramming

Accurate ramming occurs when ramming ship is in opposite the bow of the ship +/- 45°. The check whether it is possible we can do with a simple plate with the enclosed measuring cup or a previously prepared a simplified sextant (picture on the right). Make the measurement from the end of the bow of the ship, or the end of the basement of the vessel. In case of accurate ramming, to check the damage use full actual durability of our vessel - the sum of base and additional durability, derived from the speed. In our example the ship has 5 points, so you are throwing 5 dices to check the damage.

Inaccurate ramming

If we can not do accurate ramming, we can try to make inaccurate with turnover of the ship in its move. In effect we don't ram the enemy ship with full of the speed. In this case, the damage which we give are tested with just our basic durability. Our example ship has it on level 2, so we can just throw two dices (image on the right). As you can see in illustrated throw, you made just 1 point of damage.
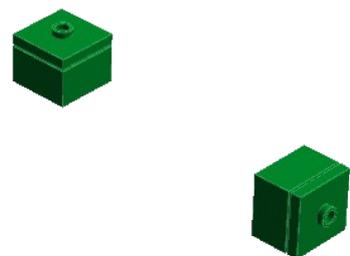
The Game

So now, you know the basic rules and feel you are ready to play, but before you begin, you have to prepare your uncharted waters for the fleets. It depends of the scenario in which you are playing, but you can always put on them islands, rocks, reefs or seaweeds. Of course you can leave your table just empty too, and start with your ships from just their side. You can play with as many friends as you like – the more fleets on the table, the more fun is from the game, but for flow game I suppose 2-4 players are accurate.

After preparing the "uncharted waters" and set the start positions for the ships, you should Po przygotowaniu "terenu" i rozmieszczeniu jednostek w miejscach startowych, należy determine the order in which the players will perform their turn. You can do that with the throw of some amount of the dices – the first will have the turn, who get the bigger result. To avoid confusion, it is wise to assume that the person will lie to the left of the last person performing the action, although it is also possible other organization. It is important that everyone can easily find out when his turn comes, and you do not avoid your turn.

The game "Battle of the Sea" consists of rounds in which each player has his turn. While the player may move your units and if you will have the possibility, to attack the enemy units / opponents. If you have more units on the table, it is worth to somehow mark those that have already done their actions - eq. by rotate the "ship card" 90 degrees. In a turn one unit can make only one move and then attack selected targets (Points of firepower can be divided into any number of enemy ships, but ramming in a round can be only one). You can of course move all of your units in your turn and attack by them.
After the round is finished, the next player begins his. In this way, when all players complete their turn one round ends and the next begins, from the same player who started the previous one.
A typical game in the default scenario "to the last drop of blood" lasts until on the "uncharted waters" will not remain only one winner - the unit / or units of a single player, but extended rules may provide for different victory conditions.