

SUR **un** **PLATEAU** VikingsAddition of Naval Combat



The latest addition to the Cry Havoc range introduces these famous seafarers, raiders, and invaders who swept across Europe, from the English coast to the Mediterranean islands... Quite an epic!

Historically Compatible

Let's first take a look at the historical context. Like all the subjects covered in the well-documented Cry Havoc series, Vikings is deeply rooted in our history and is full of details about the Norse invasions from the 8th to the 11th century. You can easily combine the ingredients of this game with those of Cry Havoc, Siege, and Croisades, as these proud sailors fought throughout Europe and as far away as the Middle East. We even find ourselves dreaming of an expansion featuring the Native Americans of the year 1000, to explore the discovery of Vinland. A real culture shock!

It's even possible to use Vikings with Dragon Noir, as many medieval fantasy worlds contain a warlike seafaring people closely resembling the Danes, Swedes, and Norwegian of our history.

All aboard!

Thanks to Vikings, Cry Havoc-style tactical combat is enriched with the possibility of naval combat. But be careful, this only applies to rowing ships; sailing ships follow completely different movement principles (let's hope a future supplement will provide rules for the latter...).

It is recommended to play the proposed scenarios in order, as they gradually introduce the rules of naval combat, which require some time to fully master. But the rewards are worth the effort.

The general rules remain the same as those of the Cry Havoc range and pose no problems. The only notable change is the modification of the game turn, where a naval combat phase is inserted between each on-foot combat phase.

Special Features:

During their first raids on the English coast, the Vikings clashed with the Anglo-Saxon defenders. The latter were their main adversaries during the proposed scenarios. Both sides had special fighters. On the Viking side, we find the famous berserkers, whose fury in combat is renowned.

All berserkers advance automatically after combat if they are victorious. If they find themselves facing an opponent, they have a 50/50 chance of entering a trance. They can then make an additional attack. If they win again, they advance and still have a 50/50 chance of remaining in a trance. And so on... We can thus witness spectacular breakthroughs, often deadly, but which in the long run become costly for the Viking player. "Managing" troops drunk with rage is not always easy.

To resist these madmen, the Anglo-Saxons had a very effective defensive tactic: the front line of shields used by the houseguards (professional soldiers). A formation of at least three men could thus constitute a very effective bulwark against the fir and automatically benefit from a favorable position for combat... An advantage not to be overlooked!

Some Viking and Anglo-Saxon soldiers wielded a formidable two-handed axe. This doubles the attack potential but places the character at a disadvantage during the opposing player's phase and makes them more vulnerable to fire. This option should therefore be used with caution, and reserved for desperate attacks or when strong defensive support is available.

Data Sheet

Game in French published by Eurogames. Part of the Cry Havoc game.

Theme: Clashes between Vikings and Anglo-Saxons.

Materials: 6 maps (2 sea maps, 4 coastal maps); a sheet of character tokens; 2 sheets of ships to cut out; a sheet of (small) materials; 2 cards containing, among other things, useful tables and a summary of naval rules; a rulebook; a history of the Vikings and 7 scenarios; 1d10.

Complexity: Medium.

Oh! My ship, it's the most beautiful ship!

The crux of Vikings is the ships: longships, galleys, and other barges.

The player must manage their ship like a true captain, as each crew member receives a specific assignment from one naval phase to the next: rowing, steering, preparing to board, using a grappling hook, or bailing. These assignments affect the ship's speed, the firing of weapons, and combat. It is therefore important to carefully consider the role of each sailor, otherwise you risk ending up with an impossible ship or being massacred during the attack phase. This adds a new tactical dimension to the actual combat.

The movement of ships, neatly summarized on a cheat sheet, takes into account the initial speed, the ship's characteristics, the number of rowers, and more. For course changes, it's convenient to use a needle to rotate the counter on the ship's axis. Here too, the movement must be carefully managed, otherwise, beware of collisions or running aground. A longship doesn't stop like a car... The rules for boarding and ramming require a bit of calculation (speed ratios, maintaining a ship sheet), but become easy to understand after a few games.

The presence of ships poses a significant tactical problem. Don't forget to leave a few soldiers to defend your boat, or risk having it stolen by your opponent. The concept of reserves and defense therefore becomes important, even for the invader. A sortie by the besieged enemy could very well permanently strand your valiant sailors on (under?) dry land...

Conclusion

This supplement therefore offers a genuine innovation in the Cry Havoc range. Not only does the player have a new historical context, which is satisfying in itself, but the naval battles truly add another dimension to the game, in exchange for a relative complexity of the rules.

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