

RAPIER 2011-10-12 JUNE



Prizes For The Saturday Raffle Greeted Gamers To The Main Ballroom

The Jacksonville Garrison's annual RAPIER convention at the Jacksonville Airport Clarion was a great convention in the ongoing tradition. This time, in addition to the Flames of War and Warhammer tournaments there were the usual all star games run by some of the best GMs in the area, if not the country. And the variety included some unusual naval and air games, as well as the usual fantasy and sci-fi epics. As usual there were a number of imaginative board, card, and RPG activities for the rest of the gaming community.

Among the most impressive events were the continuing sessions of Bill Moreno's impressive Mexican War games. As usual, the Mexican Army fielded very impressive uniforms. None were more impressive than the mounted forces of Mexico, including the Husares Guardias de los Potestas Supremos. However, as one of the games wore on, Bill let the cat out of the bag. He explained that the colorful horsemen were merely a distraction and could have little influence on the outcome of the battle, which revolved on the storming of Chapultepec defended by the heroic Mexican cadets. The architectural models were all that we have come to expect from Bill.

I think he would have done better to explain that the cavalry fulfilled its time honored role "To provide tone to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl."



Bill Moreno Explains The Mexican War



Mexican Cavalry Lends Tone To An Otherwise Vulgar Brawl



Raid on Hornchurch-One Of Many Air Battles At RAPIER



A Theme Game-Blucher At Ottingnies Using Napoleon's Battles in 15mm



Polish Infantry In The Column line and Slaughter Warm Up-Villa Muriel



The Sword In Africa-Zanzibari Slavers Versus Congo Free State



Darkest Africa Up Close And Personal



**Dark Side Stuff In The Original Convention Space
This Room Was Once The Whole Convention-Well, Almost!**



Gaming Builds Up Friday Evening-Quatre Bras In Foreground



More Napoleonics In 15mm



Upstairs-FOW In Foreground, Warhammer 40K in Background



Slaughterloo-The Return of Imitation Napoleonics



Naval Warfare and Star Wars?



Column Line And Slaughter In Russia



Storm Troopers Bite The Dust



Marc Rebhun's 15mm WWII



Lively Action In The Board Game Arena

RAPIER 2011 was a lively convention, and well attended. I don't know the head count either absolutely or compared to last year. But the place seemed well occupied and a good time was had by all. However, while last year I was moved to praise the facility (others even then complained) this year there was reason to grumble. Nothing dramatic. Prices were still reasonable. The rooms came with a free breakfast buffet, always a plus for glutinous cheapskates so common in gaming circles. But things were a bit off kilter.

In the past there was a snack bar between the main ballroom and the lobby. A great place to grab a bite to eat without going on an expedition or even dining formerly in the on site restaurant. This time it was closed. Since it did a good business in the past I wondered why they weren't willing to take our money this year.

There was also the matter of no light for the pool at night, and the odd lavatory which got no water even though water was still being piped into those on either side. Oh yes-and the dysfunctional elevator which reduced the hotel's lift capacity by 50%.

These things were, for most of us, a minor nuisance. But they suggest a downhill slide at a facility which has been a good home to RAPIER for some years now. I hope the downward slide can be checked and if possible reversed.