**Cruel Seas – Night Actions Visibility Rules v.1**

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The majority, if not the vast majority, of small ship coastal waters actions off the English, French or Norwegian coastlines in WW2 were at night. The rightly perceived vulnerability of small ships to larger units or air action led to deployment and planning so as to enable the small ships to complete their missions during the hours of darkness, or to exploit any prolonged sea mists. British accounts are replete with numerous examples of German vessels misidentifying one another and shooting at one another, sometimes for minutes after the British ships had disengaged.

**Roll for Base Visibility:**

**Roll Light Condition Base visibility Spotting Brackets**

1. Daylight Unlimited visibility None
2. Dawn/Dusk <60cm visibility 20cm
3. Full Moon <50cm visibility 20cm
4. Half Moon <40cm visibility 15cm
5. No Moon <30cm visibility 15cm
6. Fog/Dense Mist <20cm visibility 10cm

Whilst the Base Visibility Light Condition is constant for a game, importantly, light conditions were not static. At the start of each turn, roll a plus 1d3 and a minus 1d3. For every positive or negative net shift, Base Visibility is increased or decreased by 10cm for the whole of that turn.

**Target Size Target Speed**

Tiny -20cm visibility Stationary -10cm visibility

Small -10cm visibility Slow No modifier

Medium No modifier Combat +10cm visibility

Large +20cm visibility Full +30cm visibility

Huge +40cm visibility

**Viewer Speed Viewer Training Weather Conditions**

Stationary +20cm visibility Inexperienced -10cm Smooth Seas +20cm visibility

Slow No Modifier Average – No mod. Average Seas No Modifier

Combat -10cm visibility Veteran +20cm Choppy Seas -10 cm visibility

Full -20cm visibility Rough Seas -20cm visibility

Stormy Seas -30cm visibility

**To Hit**

All targets count as Obscured when targeted other than during Daylight (i.e. -2 to hit) unless if lit up by a searchlight to fire from the vessel so illuminating it. Only visible targets or targets that have been spotted may be engaged. A target vessel that used weaponry other than torpedoes on its last activation counts as if spotted until its next activation (place a coloured marker beside it to signify this).

**Spotting**

An activated vessel may attempt to spot an enemy either before it moves, or when it moves each complete movement bracket. An activated vessel may only attempt to spot each particular enemy vessel once on its turn but may otherwise attempt to spot any number of enemy vessels. This is a skill test by the active vessel. For each Spotting Bracket after the first complete Spotting Bracket (determined by the Base Visibility for the game), the skill test to spot suffers a cumulative minus one. A natural roll of six is always a success, but if the viewer technically need 7+ to spot and rolled a natural roll of one, then there is a chance of a misidentification if a friendly vessel is within 30cm of the Target Vessel: roll 1d10, Veteran crews only misidentify on a roll of 1, Average on a roll of 1 or 2 and Inexperienced on a roll of 1-3. When a misidentification occurs, the active vessel must attempt to engage the misidentified friendly vessel with all available weapons within range and arc. Note: a vessel remains spotted for the whole of the active ship’s current turn only, and unless it returns fire etc. it will have to be spotted again next turn.

**Spotting Example**: An average crew of an active vessel moving at Combat Speed in a game with Half Moon - Base Visibility and Average Seas is attempting to spot a Small MTB which is moving at Combat Speed. Assume that the positive and minus random 1d3 rolls at the start of the turn cancelled out. Base Visibility remains <40cm. The size and speed of the target cancel each other out. But as the active vessel is moving at Combat Speed this reduces Visibility to <30cm. So that the Target will be automatically spotted if <30cm away, or on an unmodified skill roll at up to <45cm, or at a minus one skill roll up to <60cm, and only on a natural six at 60cm< or on a natural roll of one to spot it then has a 1 or 2 in ten chance of a misidentification if a friendly vessel is within 30cm of the target.

**Equipment Modifications**

**Radar** [page 32]: Early radar devices on small ships were rudimentary at best. At the start of its activation, a ship seeking to use Radar must pass a skill check. If passed, its radar is active, and all large or huge ships within 120cm at the start of its activation are spotted, and its visibility range is extended by 20cm for all other ships, with a bonus of +1 to any spotting skill checks during that turn.

**Star Shells** [page 32]: An active vessel seeking to use a Star Shell must pass a skill check with a +1 bonus. If passed, the star shell is placed where desired. Any vessels within the Star Shell area are +20cm visibility and are at +2 for any skill check to spot whilst they remain within the area of effect of the Star Shell.

**Searchlight** [page 34]: An active vessel seeking to use a Searchlight must pass a skill check with a +1 bonus. If passed, it can illuminate one target vessel within 60cm. This removes the Obscured to hit penalty for any shooting by that active vessel. Other ships seeking to target the illuminated vessel (before it next moves or the searchlight is turned on to another vessel) gain +20cm visibility and a bonus of +1 to any spotting skill checks. If an illuminated target ship fires at the ship with the search light before moving on its next activation, all shots are at a further -1 to hit due to the blinding effect of the light (in addition to the -2 to hit for night firing).

**Blinds (experimental rule)**

In the confusing conditions of a Night Action it was easy to mistake the swell of a wave or the fleeting phosphorescence of a school of fish etc. as an enemy vessel! So in a Night Action (i.e. any lighting conditions other than Daylight), a force deploying Tiny, Small or Medium ships may deploy such ships as their wake markers with an additional number of blind or dummy markers as follows: Tiny ships gain 1 blind marker for every two Tiny ships; Small ships gain 1 blind marker for every three Small ships; and Medium ships gain 1 blind marker for every four Medium ships. Use dice placed on the wake markers to distinguish between them (the controlling player noting what dice equates with what actual ship or dummy). A blind wake marker is revealed and removed when it first becomes visible or is spotted. Place an extra order die in the dice bag for each blind wake marker deployed by a player. Blind wake markers if activated must either remain Stationary or move at Slow Speed. An actual ship which is spotted or becomes visible or opens fire or attempts to use any equipment is immediately placed on its corresponding wake marker.