



Welcome to the VASSAL module for *Flying Colors*, GMT's game of fleet actions in the Age of Sail. This module is posted with permission of GMT.

All known errata have been incorporated into the scenario setups. In addition, the new counters from Ship of the Line are used in place of the original Flying Colors counters for all ships that were updated in SotL.

Rules references in this document are based on the GMT Deluxe Edition (2020). A copy of the rule book may be found on the designer's website.

GENERAL INFO

As with most VASSAL modules, almost all game functions can be accessed through right-clicking on the game pieces or using the equivalent shortcut key on the selected piece. To access a counter within a stack, double-click on the ship or marker required, or use the Vassal stack navigation keys (left and right arrow) having selected the stack. If it is necessary to place a marker onto a ship *that is stacked beneath another ship*, temporarily move the overlying ship out of the way.

Mouse-over a hex to view all ships in that hex along with their counters and status.

Some of the markers (fired broadsides, for example) appear differently than their physical counterparts. This is done to reduce clutter and keep vital information visible at all times. A game option can be set (see below) to maintain these markers in tandem with the ship counter, for those who prefer the extra visibility.

All other markers needing to be placed on ships can be placed through the right click menu and this is recommended. Ship menu shortcuts are unique and can be performed on a selected ship without conflicting with shortcuts for markers on that ship, so if you know the shortcut there is no need to bring the ship to the top of the stack. See Help for an overview of the ship commands and shortcuts.

Markers can also be placed by dragging the marker onto the ship counter. However, when markers are used in place of the ship menu commands or shortcuts, some of the module's convenience features will not operate. The ship markers can be found in the Markers window in the toolbar along with all other markers.

Technical Note: Ship markers & leader counters are sensitive to ship size and nationality in order to stack correctly. Generally this is transparent to players. If a marker is moved to another counter and fails to stack, try moving the marker to a blank part of the board before dragging it back to the new ship (rear hex of double-size ships). In the case of Leader counters, use the correct type of counter (normal or frigate). When placing a normal leader counter, place it on

the rear half of the ship counter. Once so placed, simply clicking on the leader counter should align it so that it stacks with the ship.

MOVEMENT TRACKING

When a ship counter is moved (or marked as such), a red dot will appear on it. If the ship is moved, a green movement trail will also appear. When another ship is moved, the previous one will retain a faint movement trail that will show more clearly if the ship is selected again. The trails and red marks remain in place until the end turn button is pressed (see below).

SHIP CAPTURE

When a ship counter is marked Captured for the first time, any Struck, Vulnerable or Manpower markers are removed and commands are restricted, in line with game rules. The ship counter's manpower is overlaid with a strength of "1". This action can be reversed by repeating the Capture command but, after turn end, the Capture command will perform a re-capture and has no effect except to deprive the opposition of Victory Points.

Rules Note: Captured and Recaptured ships do not test for striking or sinking. However, a captured ship that is on fire may sink (explode).

THE TOOLBAR



Hover over each button in the toolbar and you will see a brief description of what it does. Most buttons are self-explanatory, but a few deserve special mention. As the description text shows, some buttons are linked to hotkeys, allowing the function to be performed directly from the keyboard.



Game Options – This button reveals a drop-down menu offering options to Retire or Switch Side or to set optional game features (see below). Optional features are reset to their defaults when a scenario is opened, so make changes after that point.



Victory Points Display – Opens a window where you can track critical game information. The module automatically keeps track of the victory point totals including a breakdown of the score in each category. The “Other” line can be used for scenarios with unique scoring conditions. Just press the plus/minus buttons to adjust the total.



Line of Sight / Range Finder - Draws a straight line from one hex to another and displays the range in hexes. Useful for checking line of sight, firing distances and ships within a commander's command range.



Ship Status Checks – A drop down menu presents tools to facilitate the different types of ship status check. Each tool is optional and, if used, should be used just before starting that check in the Ships

Status Checks phase. The buttons work by placing appropriate markers on top of the ships that are in scope of the status check. Where the check requires a die roll, a die icon is presented alongside the game marker. Players can work through the marked ships, performing the check procedure each time. Clicking on a die icon will roll the dice and remove the die icon and the status check marker. Any unused markers can be deleted manually or will be cleared at end of turn.



End Turn – When the turn is complete, push the Turn button in the toolbar to reset the board for a new turn and advance the Turn marker on the Turn Track (see Player Aids window). To reset the board without advancing the Turn marker, press Shift+F12.

Note: Broadside markers displayed using the module's Fire/Mask commands will be reset by the End Turn button. Therefore, skip the final step of the Ship Status Check phase ("Remove Broadside Markers"). In the physical game this step clears away some counter clutter to ease the Victory Determination phase.

BROADSIDE TRACKING (OPTIONAL FIRING RULE)

The module will track initial broadsides directly from the **Fire** commands (Ctrl+P / Ctrl+S). An initial broadside is displayed as "thicker" smoke. When the mouse cursor is hovered over a ship, initial broadside status is displayed beneath the image of the ship counter.

Players may previously have used the Fire command to mark masked broadsides. If broadside tracking is in use, separate commands must be used for marking masked broadsides (Ctrl+Shift+P / Ctrl+Shift+S). When a broadside is masked, the command to fire that broadside is greyed out (use the mask/unmask command a second time to reset).



By default, initial and masked broadside status changes are reported to the chat log as well. A button under the toolbar "Flag" icon allows this to be turned off or back on.

End Turn will reset all broadside markers and will also lock in any initial broadsides used during the turn.

There are three ways in which the module's broadside functions can be used:

1. Broadside tracking with reporting to the chat window (the default).
2. Broadside tracking solely using the broadside markers and ship mouse-over text.
3. Ignore broadside information completely and use Ctrl+P / Ctrl+S both for firing and masking, as was the case in earlier versions of the module.

ANCHORING LIMITS (OPTIONAL RULE 4.2)



Normally, a command on the Anchor marker allows a small satellite marker to track whether the Anchor is dropped at bow or stern. After a game starts up, the Anchoring Limits rule may be enabled. Thereafter, the module will track the number of times that a ship anchors, tracked by creation of an anchor point marker. Above two, the Anchor command is disabled. In this mode, an Anchor marker that has been used should not re-used or cloned for another ship. The anchor point marker may be used to indicate the ship's rotation limit (rule 4.2).

AWASH SHIPS (OPTIONAL RULE 4.7)



When a game starts up, the Awash Ships rule is enabled, whereby an "awash" copy of the ship counter will remain on the board after the ship is "sunk". The module continues to remove sunk ship counters to the Victory Points display.

To play without the optional rule, change the setting under the Game Options toolbar menu. Awash ship counters will not be placed unless the option is turned back on. Awash ship counters can be removed from the board using the *Delete* or *Sunk* command (Ctrl+X) with no effect on Victory Points. This is necessary when a ship has been sunk due to explosion (ship on fire rules).

An Awash marker is available on the Markers - Terrain palette, in case ever required separate from ship counters. It has no role in the module's awash ships feature.

MANPOWER LOSSES (OPTIONAL RULE 4.11)



To track Manpower (Marine) Losses, deploy a Manpower strength counter on the ship when it first loses a manpower point. This is easiest to do from the ship counter, using the *Manpower Loss* command (*Damage* sub-menu, shortcut Ctrl+M). Losses may be adjusted using commands on the counter.

OPTIONAL MARKERS



Ship Commands for Full Sails (Ctrl+F) and On Fire (Ctrl+O) use module-custom graphics to indicate the ship's status. When the Optional Markers feature is turned on, the commands will also place or remove the standard game marker.