

AMBUSH AT DE LOS CAYOS

Historical Background



fter escaping capture by the Spanish following a shipwreck that nearly cost him his life, Francois l'Olonnais put to sea once more with a handful of escaped slaves in a small vessel he had obtained by trickery. Meanwhile, l'Olonnais' captured

men from the shipwreck were pressed for answers about their outlaw captain's whereabouts and, knowing no better about his fate than the Spaniards, they professed that l'Olonnais had died—an accidental untruth which spread like wildfire throughout the Spanish colonies, who were delighted to celebrate their deliverance from such a cruel and terrible enemy.

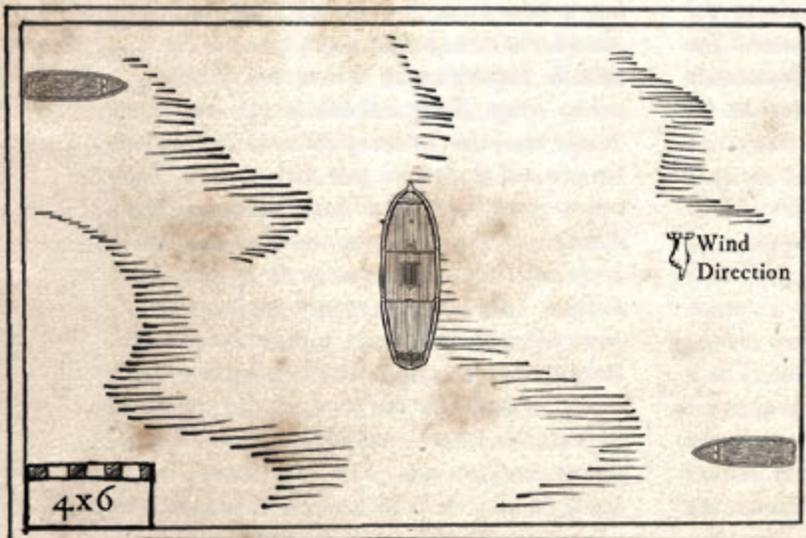
L'Olonnais, having seen these rejoicings for his death, made haste to escape with the slaves above mentioned. He and his new recruits made for a little town called De los Cayos on the north shore of Cuba, where they export hides, tobacco, and sugar to Havana. As it is very shallow along the coast, the Spaniards use barques for this trade.

L'Olonnais intended to plunder some of these vessels, but he was seen by some fishermen, who had the luck to escape him. These men went overland to Havana, crying out to the governor that l'Olonnais, the feared French corsair, was on

the coast with two canoes, and they dare not pursue their trade for fear of him.

The governor did not believe it, for he had received letters from Campeche, saying l'Olonnais was dead. Nevertheless, at the entreaty of the Spaniards who brought the news, he had a small ship made ready, mounted with ten guns and carrying ninety well-armed men. This ship was dispatched with orders not to return without having destroyed the rovers. To carry out this intention, he sent along an African man to be executioner and hang the buccaneers—except their captain, whom they should bring alive to Havana.

This ship arrived at Cayos, of whose coming the pirates were advertised beforehand, and instead of flying, went to seek it in the river Estera, where she rode at anchor. The pirates seized some fishermen and forced them by night to show them the entry of the port, hoping soon to obtain a greater vessel than their two canoes, and thereby to mend their fortune. They arrived, after two in the morning, very nigh the ship, and the watch on board the ship asking them, "Whence they came, and if they had seen any pirates aboard?" they caused one of the prisoners to answer, "They had seen no pirates, nor anything else;" which answer made them believe that the pirates had fled upon hearing of their coming.



SETUP:

This scenario should be played on a table at least 4'x6'. One long and two short table edges are treated as shorelines and the entire table is made up of navigable water. The wind is blowing from the the long shoreline table edge.

SCENARIO RULES:

The Spanish Force is comprised of 200 points of units from the Guarda Costas or Spanish Militia force lists and must include a single ship of no more than 10 artillery pieces. The Spanish force will include a free Captured Merchant Character from the Advisors and Hostages section of the No Peace Beyond the Line expansion book. The Merchant is used to represent the Spanish executioner sent to hang the pirates. However, as the French are

not interested in sparing the executioners life, the +1 to hit penalty on the unit the executioner joins is ignored. This model is best represented by a Lancero miniature. As the Spanish had such a superior advantage in numbers, the Spanish commander may call upon reserves from the ships lower decks to reinforce a unit that has taken casualties. To do so, the Commander must spend a command point. When the command point is spent, the chosen unit may add the necessary number of models to bring the unit back up to the model count it began the game with. This may not be done if there are enemy units aboard the Spanish ship. For the purpose of determining Strike Points, only the starting number of models determines the amount of casualties required to earn a strike point. Replaced casualties do not reduce the number of models lost when determining Strike Points.

The French Force is comprised of 200 points from the Flibustiers Nau or French Buccaneers Force lists and should be lead by Francois l'Olonnais. The French force must include two boats and may not include any ships.

The table will not "scroll" if a ship sails off on an edge. If a ship or boat sails off an edge that contains a shoreline, the ship stops at the table edge and runs 'aground. A ship or boat that has sailed off of the edge with no shoreline has fled the battle and is removed from the game.

This battle takes place just before day-break, so visibility is limited. However, the French Buccaneers have announced their presence with loud battle cries that have alerted the Spanish crew to their presence. Likewise, the large Spanish ship is easy to spot in the low light. As a result, all shooting with small arms and artillery receives a +1 penalty on the first and second turn. This penalty does not affect a weapon's ability to hit at maximum range.

DEPLOYMENT:

The Spanish ship is placed with all of its crew aboard in the center of the table with its stern (rear) facing the table edge with no shorelines and its sail setting set to anchored.

The two French boats are then deployed

with all of their crew aboard. One boat is placed along each short edge with both boats having their sterns touching a table edge. The boats begin the game with their sail settings set to 0" and no units may begin the game assigned to the sweeps (oars).

GAME LENGTH:

Six Turns

OBJECTIVES:

- » The Spanish Force gains a strike point if any French units are aboard the Spanish ship at the end of any turn.
- » The Spanish Force gains a strike point if the Spanish ship sails off the table.
- » The French Force gains two strike points if the Spanish ship sails off the table.
- » The French Force gains a strike point if there are no French units aboard the Spanish ship by the end of turn 6.
- » The French Force gains a strike point if l'Olonnais is removed as a casualty.

Historical Aftermath

» The Spaniards soon found the contrary, for at about break of day the pirates assaulted the vessel on both sides with their two canoes with such vigor that, though the Spaniards behaved themselves as they ought, and made as good defense as they could. They made some use of their great guns, yet they were forced to surrender, as the pirates swarmed them amongst the fired broadsides and, sword in hand, chased every crew member down under the hatches. From hence l'Olonnais commanded them to be brought up, one by one, and in this order caused their heads to be struck off. Among the rest came up the African, designed to be the pirates' executioner. This fellow implored mercy at his hands very dolefully, telling l'Olonnais he was constituted hangman of that ship, and if he would spare him, he would tell him faithfully all that he should desire. L'Olonnais, after making him confess what he thought fit, commanded him to be murdered with the rest. Thus he cruelly and barbarously put them all to death, reserving only one alive,

whom he sent back to the governor of the Havana, with this message in writing: "I shall never henceforward give quarter to any Spaniard whatsoever; and I have great hopes I shall execute on your own person the very same punishment I have done upon them you sent against me. Thus I have retaliated the kindness you designed to me and my companions."

» The governor, much troubled at this sad news, swore, in the presence of many, that he would never grant quarter to any pirate that should fall into his hands. But the citizens of the Havana desired him not to persist in the execution of that rash and rigorous oath, seeing the pirates would certainly take occasion from thence to do the same, and they had a hundred times more opportunity of revenge than he; that, being necessitated to get their livelihood by fishery, they should hereafter always be in danger of their lives. By these reasons he was persuaded to bridle his anger, and remit the severity of his oath.

SUGGESTED FORCE LISTS:

SPANISH: <https://forcebuilder.bloodandplunder.com/index.php?builder&forceid=1fb61fa2>

FRENCH: <https://forcebuilder.bloodandplunder.com/index.php?builder&forceid=ac163ea4>