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This low-tech play set consisted of plastic toys representing enemy kingdoms - Vikings and barbarians - each with simple castle-like towers and loose bricks to construct a stronghold on a square mat depicting a moated island. The game's name was not merely a coincidence, as the true fun lay in the rubber band-powered catapults and crossbows (more like ballistas) that the opposing sides were armed with. In alternating turns, players would fling and fire round carom discs at each other's stronghold and troops. Knocking over figures was scored as casualties, while landing caroms in enemy territory allowed advances in raiding forces. The game culminated when a player revealed and seized the treasure buried beneath their opponent's castle. I'm fortunate to have preserved my Crossbows and Catapults sets, complete with original instruction books and expansions. The memory of my teenage days with Crossbows and Catapults still evokes a sense of nostalgia when I think about it now. ===== In the "Trojan Horse" set, the catapult-tailed horse "explodes" from the sides when hit on the base of its front feet, and the accompanying crossbow-armed "battle shield" pops open when struck at the front. My favret expansion, the "Battling Giants" set, came with 8-inch tall minotaur and cyclops models which fling caroms at the enemy by pushing a button at their backs. The Crossbows and Catapults "Castle Outpost" expansion set The Crossbows and Catapults "Trojan Horse" expansion set The Crossbows and Catapults "Battling Giants" expansion set Every Crossbows and Catapults expansion came with new rules and components for each side, allowing for alot of additional play options on the floor battlefield. The expened rules for each set allowed for standalone games or for incorporating the new pieces into the base "Battle Set" game. All the instructions also encouraged players to make up their own rules, something my brothers, friends and I did endlessly in our brief period of Crossbows and Catapults obsessions. H.G. Wells, author of "Little Wars," and his friends wargaming on a parlor floor In revisiting my teen delight over Crossbows and Catapults my mind went straight to the descriptions of early 20th-century gaming laid out in Little Wars by H.G. Wells. The tiny 1913 book is seen today as the formative basis for what would become miniatures wargaming in the coming decades. Building on the more abstract Kriegsspiel tradition of the early 1800s, the genesis moment for using toys in wargaming is described in the book as an idea of one of Wells's friends: "I beleive that if one set up a few obstacles on the floor, volumes of the British Encyclopedia and so forth, to make a Country, and moved these soldiers and guns about, one could have rather a good game..." Early 20th-century die-cast Britains spring-loaded 4.7 naval gun As you read through the game descriptions and rules set forth by Wells, quite a number of similarities to Crossbows and Catapults arise. Rudimentary buildings or forts are placed on small boards, much like the plastic mats provided in Crossbows and Catapults. Resolving combat in the games played by Wells and his gentlemanly friends was commonly achieved through the firing of wooden pegs with the spring-loaded Britains 4.7 naval gun at opponent's infantry, calvary, buildings and walls constructed of wooden blocks. Seventy years after Little Wars, Crossbows and Catapults presented a very similar floor game. The rubber-band catapults and ballistas firing caroms at the soldiers, castles and plastic brick walls. In both games, proximity of infantry to artillery — a naval gun of Wells's day or a catapult in the modern game — determines whether that piece may fire. The measurement of the play area as set forth by Wells and outlined in the Crossbows and Catapults basic rules are uncannily similar. "Battleground: Crossbows and Catapults" re-release from 2007 The Crossbows and Catapults license passed through a number of game publishers over the years and was re-released as "Battleground: Crossbows and Catapults" in 2007. The game was modified and updated with orcs versus knights plus some redesigned components and additional expansion sets. I had a chance to play with my Crossbows and Catapults sets again this past week, some 30 years after I first I bent down on my teenaged knees to do battle between barbarians and vikings. Playing with my nine-year-old son, all the fun of launching plastic discs at opposing armies came back. The game is ===== A classic game of strategy and skill, Crossbows & Catapults, has been a staple of tabletop gaming since its initial release in the early 1980s. Its connection to Little Wars floor games by Wells can be seen in its focus on commanding armies and launching attacks with medieval-inspired weaponry. For collectors, the original 1983 "Crossbows and Catapults Battle Set" is still available for purchase on eBay, with prices ranging from \$50-200. The game has undergone several revisions, including a re-released version titled "Battleground: Crossbows and Catapults," which can be found for around \$50. This new edition features updated components and artwork, while maintaining the core gameplay experience. For those looking to share or remix the material from this game, the CCO license allows for free use and adaptation in any medium or format. However, attribution is required for any modifications made to the original content. The gameplay itself involves strategically placing pieces on a flat surface to take out opponents' forces and defenses. Players can load elastic-powered weapons to launch battle discs and aim for flags to earn bonus lives. The first player to knock over all their enemies wins, with the game including two complete armies of Knights and Orcs. =====warrior can be obstructed from the opponent's view by a weapon or building.Gameplay Mechanics and Game ObjectiveSetup. Players build their castles and defenses on the game mat.Turn Structure: Each player has two actions per turn - moving a warrior, hero, or weapon, or firing a weapon.Weapon Rules: A hero or warrior must be within two inches of a weapon to operate it.Projectile Types: Crossbows fire caroms along the ground, while catapults fire in an arc.Objectives: - Knock over the enemy tower. - Capture all of the opponent's projectiles. - Get four spies into the enemy courtyard. - Knock the enemy tower over and land a projectile on the secret treasure beneath it.Piece Movement: Warriors and weapons move six inches per action; heroes move 12 inches.**Battleground: Crossbows & Catapults** is a game that focuses on quick firing of projectiles, it's more about dexterity and hand-eye coordination, its very fun and easy to play.Families can enjoy it and also younger gamers.It's good for children to learn about tabletop gaming and improve their motor skills.This game may not be for those who are looking for something deeper with strategy.