

THE LYGINUS – 335 BC

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Historical background

The first Alexander's campaign, after becoming King of the Macedonia, took place in the spring of 335 BC against the Triballians, that lived in the today's northern Bulgaria. Leaving from Amphipolis he drove north toward Edirne and he overcame the resistance of the free Thracian people at Sipka pass.

After this first skirmish, Alexander drove toward the Danube but Sirmo, King of Triballians, informed as to where the Macedonians were directed, drew up his troops along river Lyginus (probably today's Isker), one of the Danube's tributaries, defending his people that took refuge in the island of Peuce and blocking Alexander's path.

Alexander III soon engaged the Triballians with his phalanx, set in column, the archers and the agrian light troops firing at the enemy and the cavalry on the flanks.

The Triballians reacted with their ranged fire too but, as soon as their missiles exhausted, they were overwhelmed by the double envelope maneuver of the young but already brilliant Alexander.

War Council

Macedonian Army

- Leader: Alexander
- 4 Command Cards
- Moves first

Triballian Army:

- Leader: Sirmo
- 4 Command Cards

Victory

5 Banners

Special Rules

Alexander and Companion Cavalry rules (expansion 1)
The river Lyginus is fordable.

Sources

A.Frediani: *"Le grandi battaglie di Alessandro Magno"* Newton&Compton 2004.

Arrian the Nicomedian: *"Anabasis of Alexander"*. Rizzoli 1994.

Book I, 2:1-10.

"Alexander sent back the booty to the coast cities, having entrusted Lisania and Philota to take care of it.; he himself, after having climbed over the peak, marched through the Emo against Triballians and reached the Lyginus river. It is a three days' march from Istro to the Emo. Sirmo, the king of Triballians, having been informed since long time as to Alexander's expedition, sent forward women and children to the Istro, ordering them to cross it toward one of the island, called Peuce. On this island, also the Thracian people neighbouring the Triballian took refuge because of Alexander's push and Sirmo himself reached it along with his retinue; the bulk of Triballians drove back to that river from which Alexander had pushed forward the day before. As soon as he knew their movements, he came back too and he moved against the Triballians, reaching them while they camped; then they drew up near the deep valley along the river.

Alexander himself led the phalanx, having set it in column, and he ordered the archers and slingers to run on firing at the barbarians, in order to draw them into open field.

And as soon they were under fire, having been hit, they run out to fight the archers that, as such, were lightly armed. When Alexander pushed them out of the deep valley, he ordered Philota to launch the Macedonian cavalry against the right flank, where the triballians had advanced most during the sortie; he also ordered Eraclide and Sopolis to lead the horsemen of Beozia and Anphipoli against the left flank. He led the infantry phalanx and the rest of cavalry, that he drew up in front of the phalanx, against the centre. And, as long as they skirmished, the Triballian did not come off worst; but when the phalanx in line hurled itself upon them with violence and the cavalry pursued them, no more with ranged combat but closer, they turned through the deep valley and toward the river. Three thousand men died during the flight, while a few men were captured because there was a thick bush in front of the river and the impending night did not allow the Macedonians to pursue them stubbornly. Ptolemy tell that the Macedonians lost eleven horsemen and about forty infantrymen."