

Asculum: 279BC (the 2nd Day Main Battle) Pyrrhus Against Rome II

Historical Background:

“The first day’s battle ended only by night. Pyrrhus’ forces slept on their arms; the Roman army, better provided crossed to its camp. It had not been victorious.”

“Next day Pyrrhus... managed to take possession of advanced ground where he could put his elephants into line, as well as confine the legion to a surface on which it could not so readily advance or retreat, in the swaying to and fro of the lines closing in battle. The Romans had prepared some chariots with long projecting poles, to meet the onset of the elephants; but they proved unavailing on the rough ground.”

“The conflict of the second day was long and bitter. The legionaries fought among the spears of the phalanx, reckless of their own persons, determined to break through the bristling array; but time and time again they were thrown back by the heroic personal efforts of Pyrrhus. Finally Roman pertinacity carried the day; the king’s allies could no longer resist the better discipline of the Roman cohorts, and the wings weakened, the legionaries began slowly to force the wavering phalanx back. Pyrrhus, foreseeing the gravity of his situation, sent his elephants on a circuit to attack the Roman horse....The mighty creatures charged down in line with a thundering tread upon the knights, and as at Heraclea, the frightened horse gave way....Aided by this diversion, Pyrrhus rallied the phalanx and the allies, and with one advance all along the line forced back the startled legionaries. The Romans were driven beyond the river. Pyrrhus held the field.

“...The losses were enormous; fifteen thousand fell on both side says Dionysius; but Hieronymus gives the Roman loss at six thousand killed, while Pyrrhus’ own accounts state his losses at three thousand five hundred and fifty killed...”

(The above was from T.A. Dodge’s 1891 masterwork Hannibal p.115-116)

Terrain:

X13 Fordable River—A1 down the “A” through to A13

X10 Hills ---H11 G10 G8 G7 H3 G2 F4 E11 D10 D6

X8 Woods—H1 E1 F11 G12 B12 B6 E10 E3

X4 Marsh—C1, C2, B1, B2 (Use Broken Terrain tiles for Marsh see special rules below)

Order of Battle and Initial Setup for Asculum 279BC

Roman Army:

X8 Medium Infantry: C5, C4, B4, B5, B8, B9, C9, C10

X4 Heavy Infantry: C6, C7, C8, B7

X2 Auxillia: B11, B3
X4 Medium Cavalry: C12, C11, C2, C3
X5 Light Infantry: D9, D7, D5, D3, D1
X2 Leader: C6 & C9 (Consuls Decius & Sulpicius)
X1 Chariot B10 (this is a special anti-elephant construction see special rules below)

Epirotean/Allied Army: (use Carthaginian Blocks with one extra Medium Infantry to be created from the spares)

X4 Heavy Infantry (Phalanx Infantry see special rules) G6, G7, H5, H7
X4 Medium Infantry (Allied raw troops see special rules) H8 G8 G5 H4
X4 Auxillia (Allied raw troops see special rules) G9, H9, G4, H3
X2 Elephant: I9 I8
X2 Leader: G3 (Pyrrhus) G7 (Milon)
X3 Medium Cavalry: G11, G10, G2
X1 Heavy cavalry: G3
X3 Light Infantry: F6, G1, H11
X1 Light Slings F4
X1 Light Archers F8

War Council:

Epirotean/Allied Army:

Leader: Pyrrhus
6 Command Cards

Roman Army

Leaders: Consuls Decius & Sulpicius
5 Command Cards
Move First

Victory:

Both sides need 12 Banners to win: If the Epirots reach 12 Banners at any time play through the next complete Roman Player-turn—if the Romans reach 12 Banners during their next Player-turn the result is an historical “Pyrrhic Victory” otherwise the game ends in a Epirot Victory. The Romans get 2 Banners (instead of 1) if Pyrrhus is eliminated.

Scenario Special Rules:

- 1) All Epirot Heavy Infantry are considered to be Phalanx Infantry. Phalanx Infantry operates under a set of special rules as follows in a) through e) below.
 - a) Clear Terrain Combat Bonus: When involved in Close Combat with an enemy Infantry unit, a Phalanx Infantry that still has three or four blocks on map receives an extra (+1) dice **if both** of the involved opposing units are in clear hex with no terrain tile present. This is both for any initial Close Combat Attack, and also when Battling Back (but see exception in d) below). The bonus does not apply to any Momentum Combat.

- b) Phalanx Infantry cannot utilize “double time” Movement or Order activation per the Double Time card. Phalanx Infantry may not be ordered at all by play of a Double Time Card.
- c) Phalanx Infantry may not engage in Close Combat if they have just moved before combat their maximum of one hex, unless the move was into one of the two hexes toward their “front” (i.e.: “front” as in towards the initial setup position of the opposing army) of the moving Phalanx Infantry unit, **and** that moving Phalanx unit then proceeds to engage in close combat with an enemy unit in one of its “front” two hexes in the new hex it moved to. Phalanx Infantry may engage in normal Momentum Movement and Momentum Combat regardless of the direction of the combat—although without the Phalanx Clear terrain Combat bonus if involved in Momentum Combat (see a) above). Note: Non-moving Ordered Phalanx units may always engage in Close Combat.
- d) Phalanx infantry units that “Battle Back” at enemy units located in hexes other than the “front hexes” roll a maximum of three dice (and even this could be reduced further by terrain factors).
- e) Phalanx Infantry units located **in clear terrain that also still have three or four blocks on map** at the start of the close-combat or battle back ignore the first sword hit inflicted on them by an enemy unit attacking or battling back from a “front” hex. This advantage is also granted in any Momentum Combat.
Example of “Front” hexes: A Phalanx Infantry unit in hex H7 would have the following two hexes adjacent: G8 & G7 as its “front” hexes.

2) **Leader Special Rules:**

A Leader attached (stacked with) a friendly unit may cancel one sword hit on the unit **in lieu** of canceling a retreat hit. Pyrrhus can cancel **both** a retreat **and** a sword hit if present

A unit involved in close combat with the support of a Leader may only count one helmet hit amongst those rolled to inflict a hit on an opposing unit.

An Epirot unit **in the same hex with** Pyrrhus can count up to two helmets when inflicting hits in close combat or battle back rather than just one.

3) **Epirotean Elephant Reserve Special Rules**

Once per game the Epirot side can declare before playing their card for their player-turn a special “Elephant Reserve Move”... The Epirot Player may immediately move any of his elephant units not adjacent to the enemy up to 4 hexes as if the elephants were making a normal move, however this move may not enter hexes adjacent to enemy units. After the “Elephant Reserve Move” he plays his card normally and may even have the elephants move again and have combat—being ordered via the card. The Elephant Reserve Move may not be executed during the first three Epirot turns of the game.

4) **Raw Troops—Epirot Italian Allies**

All Epirotean Medium Infantry and Auxillia units are assumed to be made of raw troops recruited from the Greco-Italian allies of Pyrrhus. Epirot/Allied Medium Infantry Battle

back at three dice (instead of four) normally— Epirot/Allied Auxillia Battle back at two dice (instead of three) normally.

5) Marsh Hex Tiles:

Hexes C1, C2, B1, & B2 are considered to be marsh or “wetlands” hexes. A unit that retreats or evades into a wetland hex stops at the first hex entered—this satisfies **the rest** of the any retreat hits or evasion result, however one block is removed from the retreating or evading unit (Leaders are OK if Retreating or evading—no loss). Attacks in or out of Marshes are the same dice as if the area was “broken ground”. Units entering a marsh hex via normal movement must halt move and may not engage in close combat if the enemy is adjacent. Chariots & Phalanx units may never enter or close combat into a marsh hex. Archers in a marsh hex may not fire if they have just moved and fire with only one dice if they started their move in a marsh hex. Units that make a Momentum advance into a marsh hex may not move further and may not engage in Momentum Combat. Marshes do not block line of sight for fire combat.

6) The Roman Anti-Elephant Chariot (AEC) unit

The Romans, at game start, have a special anti-elephant chariot (or AEC) unit that sets-up in hex B10. Its normal move for the scenario is one hex (as opposed to the normal two hexes for heavy chariots)—The unit may not Close Combat attack or Battle Back against enemy units other than elephants, but is totally immune to any retreat or sword

Hits inflicted on it, and indeed is immune to any missile fire directed at it, in fact it can never suffer and may never suffer a retreat result. Against Elephants it rolls 3 dice normally when attacking or battling back—elephant units roll only two dice when attacking or battling back against the AEC—and sword results from the Elephant on the AEC never inflict a hit. The AEC receives no additional advantage in combat if a Leader supports it.