

## **“Swords of the Celts”: Prelude The Battle of Faesulae 225BC**

### **Historical Background:**

“The Celts, then, descended on Etruria and overran the whole region, plundering the country as they chose, and as they met no opposition, they advanced on Rome itself. When they had arrived at Clusium, a city only three days march from Rome, news reached them that the army which the Romans had posted in Etruria was coming up in their rear and was close upon them, whereupon they turned back to meet it, full of ardour to engage the enemy. At sunset the two armies were almost in contact, and they encamped for the night with only a short distance separating them. When it was dark the Celts lit their camp-fires. They left their cavalry with orders that they should wait for daybreak, and then as soon as they became visible to the enemy they were to follow the route which the infantry had already taken. In the meanwhile the Celts with drew their main body under cover of darkness towards a town named Faesulae and took up positions. Their plan was to wait for the cavalry, and at the same time disconcert any attack by the enemy by confronting them with an unforeseen situation. When the Romans sighted the cavalry at daybreak and saw them unsupported, they concluded that the Celts had fled, and so pursued the cavalry along the line of the enemy’s supposed retreat. Then, as they approached, the main body of the Celts sprang forward from their positions and charged them. A fierce battle followed, which was stubbornly contested on both sides, but in the end the courage and superior numbers of the Celts prevailed. The Romans lost 6,000 men, and the rest took to flight, most of these retreating to a hill which offered them a naturally strong position. The Celts at first tried to take the hill by assault, but were exhausted from their march of the previous night and by the suffering and hardship caused by the fighting, and so they made haste to rest and refresh themselves. But they left a detachment of cavalry to guard the hill, and determined to attack the fugitives next day unless they offered to surrender.”

Meanwhile the...consul Lucius Aemilius Paullus, who was in command of the second Roman army near the Adriatic, had been informed that the Celts had invaded Etruria...He hurried southward to help, and fortunately reached the battlefield at the critical moment.. He encamped near the enemy, and the Romans on the hill, as soon as they saw his camp-fires, understood what had happened....The commanders of the Gauls, who had also seen the camp-fires, concluded that the enemy had arrived and held a council of war. At this King Aneroestes argued that since they had by now captured so much booty...that they should not battle again and thus put all their gains to risk, but should return home in safety....The council decided in the circumstances to follow Aneroestes’ advice. They agreed on this during the night, broke camp before daybreak and marched through Etruria along the coast. Paullus then rescued the surviving remnant of the Roman army from the hill and united it with his own force. He decided that this was not the moment to risk a , pitched battle, but chose to follow the enemy’s rear and watch for a favorable place or moment to harass him, or recover some of the plunder....

(From Book II of Polybius’ Rise of the Roman Empire written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC)

*(Paullus, of course, shortly thereafter, with the help of his consular colleague returning from Sardinia, managed to corner this Gallic Army up the coast of Etruria at Telamon and destroy it. See the Telamon 225BC scenario, for an extensive excerpt from Polybius that covers these events)*

**Terrain Setup:**

X13 Hill Tiles: B11, B2, B3, B4, A3, A4, F2, F3, F8, F9, G11, H6, G5

X10 Forest Tiles: C1, C13, A12, E13, F12, H12, I11, I4, H1, G4

X4 Broken Ground Tiles: A2, A5, E1, H10

Order of Battle and Initial Setup for Faesulae 225BC

Gallic Tribes: x22 units and leaders (Use Carthaginian Blocks, but make up one extra Warrior unit and one extra Medium infantry unit from spare blocks and labels & also use the two warrior units from the “Roman Block” gray mix marking them with a single blank burgundy block on top to show which side they belong to )

X1 Chariot (see special rules below): G12

X2 Leaders G5 (King Concolitanus) F7 (King Aneroestes)

X4 Medium Infantry H4, G5, H8, G9 (Elite Warriors see special rules below)

X2 Light Infantry G11, F3

X2 Auxillia :F12, G1 (has no Missile Capability see special rules below)

X6 Warrior : G3, G4, G7, H6, H10, G10

X3 Medium Cav. G2, F6, F8

X2 Heavy Cav. (Noble Cavalry see special rules below) F5, F7

Roman Armies—x17 units and leaders (use the Roman Blocks)

X8 Medium Infantry: D5, D6, D7, D8, C6, C7, C8, B6

X4 Auxillia: D3, C4, C10, D10

X2 Light Infantry: D4, D9

X2 Medium Cavalry: D2, D11

X1 Leader C7 (Praetor)

OB Note: The “Roman” force in this battle was really a hastily raised provincial army of levies made up of Sabines and Etruscans, allies led by a Roman Praetor. Polybius tells us that they numbered about 50,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, by contrast the Gallic tribes supposedly fielded 50,000 foot and 20,000 men mounted on horse or aboard chariots.

**War Council:**

Gallic Tribes:

Leader: King Aneroestes

5 Command Cards Move First—The Gallic Player **moves twice** before the first Roman move.

Roman Army:

Leaders: Praetor

5 Command Cards

### **Victory:**

8 Banners for both sides

### **Special Scenario Rules:**

1) **Gallic Elite Warriors:** All Gallic medium infantry units are treated as Warriors for all purposes, they are Elite Warriors—in addition they receive one extra dice the very first time in the scenario they battle back or engage in close combat as long as the unit still has three or more blocks.

2) **Gallic Auxillia and Noble cavalry:**

- a) The Gallic Auxillia units have no missile capability.
- b) All Gallic Heavy Cavalry are considered to be Noble Cavalry—they move three hexes, their normal Close Combat dice is 3 dice (not 4) --- in addition they receive one extra dice the very first time in the scenario they battle back or engage in close combat as long as the unit still has two or more blocks

3) **Gallic Chariots:** Likely some of the Gallic vehicles were war chariots, but their main purpose in battle was probably a blocking one—their role as a decisive battle force in the field had long since passed in 225BC

Gallic Chariots may only move one hex when moving

- a) The only way to inflict hits on Gallic Chariots is to engage them in Close Combat or Battle Back and roll the matching “red” symbol. Gallic Chariots are totally immune to Roman Missile fire—Gallic Chariots totally ignore any Flag hits inflicted on them—Flag results are always No effect.
- b) Gallic Chariots normally roll only 2 dice in close combat or battle back—but may have that increased through the + # on the cards if ordered by such cards.

4) **Special Leader Rules:**

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

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.

5) **Gallic Line Commands**

The maximum number of units the Gallic player may move/order with a Line Command Card is five units.