

Caesar Against The Helvetii: The Battle of the Bibracte 58 BC

Scenario Note: This particular scenario probably requires the use of at least two C & C sets, however folks with access to miniatures can probably improvise something.

Historical Background: (A Selection from Caesar's own "Gallic Wars" Book 1)

“Caesar, when he observes this, draws off his forces to the next hill, and sent the cavalry to sustain the attack of the enemy. He himself, meanwhile, drew up on the middle of the hill a triple line of his four veteran legions in such a manner, that he placed above him on the very summit the two legions, which he had lately levied in Hither Gaul, and all the auxiliaries; and he ordered that the whole mountain should be covered with men, and that meanwhile the baggage should be brought together into one place, and the position be protected by those who were posted in the upper line. The Helvetii having followed with all their wagons, collected their baggage into one place: they themselves, after having repulsed our cavalry and formed a phalanx, advanced up to our front line in very close order. “

“Caesar, having removed out of sight first his own horse, then those of all, that he might make the danger of all equal, and do away with the hope of flight, after encouraging his men, joined battle. His soldiers hurling their javelins from the higher ground, easily broke the enemy's phalanx. That being dispersed, they made a charge on them with drawn swords. It was a great hindrance to the Gauls in fighting, that, when several of their bucklers had been by one stroke of the (Roman) javelins pierced through and pinned fast together, as the point of the iron had bent itself, they could neither pluck it out, nor, with their left hand entangled, fight with sufficient ease; so that many, after having long tossed their arm about, chose rather to cast away the buckler from their hand, and to fight with their person unprotected. At length, worn out with wounds, they began to give way, and, as there was in the neighborhood a mountain about a mile off, to betake themselves thither. When the mountain had been gained, and our men were advancing up, the Boii and Tulingi, who with about 15,000 men closed the enemy's line of march and served as a guard to their rear, having assailed our men on the exposed flank as they advanced [prepared] to surround them; upon seeing which, the Helvetii who had betaken themselves to the mountain, began to press on again and renew the battle. The Romans having faced about, advanced to the attack in two divisions; the first and second line, to withstand those who had been defeated and driven off the field; the third to receive those who were just arriving. “

“Thus, was the contest long and vigorously carried on with doubtful success. When they could no longer withstand the attacks of our men, the one division, as they had begun to do, betook themselves to the mountain; the other repaired to their baggage and wagons. For during the whole of this battle, although the fight lasted from the seventh hour [i.e. 12 (noon) 1 P. M.] to eventide, no one could see an enemy with his back turned. The fight was carried on also at the baggage till late in the night, for they had set wagons in the way as a rampart, and from the higher ground kept throwing weapons upon our men, as they came on, and some from between the wagons and the wheels kept darting their lances and javelins from beneath, and wounding our men. After the fight had lasted some time, our men gained possession of their baggage and camp. There the daughter and one of the sons of Orgetorix was taken. After the battle about 130,000 men [of the enemy] remained

alive, who marched incessantly during the whole of that night; and after a march discontinued for no part of the night, arrived in the territories of the Lingones on the fourth day, while our men, having stopped for three days, both on account of the wounds of the soldiers and the burial of the slain, had not been able to follow them. Caesar sent letters and messengers to the Lingones [with orders] that they should not assist them with corn or with any thing else; for that if they should assist them, he would regard them in the same light as the Helvetii. After the three days' interval he began to follow them himself with all his forces. “

“The Helvetii, compelled by the want of every thing, sent ambassadors to him about a surrender. When these had met him on the way and had thrown themselves at his feet, and speaking in suppliant tone had with tears sued for peace, and [when] he had ordered them to await his arrival, in the place, where they then were, they obeyed his commands. When Caesar arrived at that place, he demanded hostages, their arms, and the slaves who had deserted to them.”

Terrain Setup:

X17 Level 1 Hills (see special rules, use Hills from C &C) B1, A6, A7, A13, G1, I3, I4, H3, H4, G5, G6, G7, G8, H8, H9, I10, I13

X8 Level 2 Hills (see special rules, use hills from Battle Cry or Memoir '44): I5, I6, I7, I8, I9, H5, H6, H7

X1 Forest: B12

X2 Broken Ground: A1, A12

X2 Roman Camp: (see special rules): B5, B7

X3 Roman Rampart (see special rules) **A5** faces A4/B4 **A8** faces B8/A9 **B6** faces B8/A9

Initial Setup:

Roman Army: (Use Roman Blocks)

X6 Heavy Infantry (5 blocks each Legionary Infantry): C4, C5, C6, C8, C9, C10

X6 Medium Infantry (5 blocks each Legionary Infantry) C7, B4, B5, B7, B8, B9

X4 Medium Infantry (4 blocks each Recruit Legionary units) A5, A6, A7, A8

(See Special rules on Roman Legionaries and Recruit Legionary)

X1 Light Archer: B6

X1 Light Slinger B10

X3 Medium Cavalry: C2, C3, C11

X2 Leaders: C9 (Caesar) C5 (Labienus)

Helvetii Horde Setup (Use Carthaginian and Roman Warrior Blocks)

X13 Warriors: G3, G5, I10, H3, F5, F8, F10, G9, G8, G7, H10, H12, G13

X5 Elite Warriors (see Special Rules use Medium Infantry units): F6, F7, H12, G12, F3

X2 Medium Cavalry: F2, G2

X2 Light Infantry: F4, F9

X6 Wagons (1 block each—use Chariot blocks see special rules) I11, I12, H11, H12, G12, G13

X2 Leaders F6 (Helvetii Chief) G12 (Boii Chief)

War Council

Roman Army

Leader: Caesar

6 Cards (one of these cards is a Line Command the remainder are randomly picked)

Helveti Horde

Leader: Helveti Chief

5 Cards

First Move: Once they draw cards and set-up the players each roll a six-sided dice for first move—high roll goes first- on a tie Romans go first.

Victory:

Romans must score 15 Banners—note: eliminating one block wagon units scores one banner.

Helveti must score 10 Banners to win—eliminating Caesar scores 2 Banners—forcing Caesar to evade off map scores 1 Banner. The Helveti can also score banners if they over-run Roman Camp/ Rampart hexes—one Banner for each such hex over-run—see Special rules.

Special Rules:

The “Marian” Command Card Deck

Historical Note: Combat in the 1st Century BC along the Roman frontier was somewhat different than the wars between civilized states in the 3rd Century BC. There was less room for combined arms tactics and maneuver, and battles probably tended to be more of the nature of hand to hand full bore slugfests with the stakes being nothing less than the survival of the tribe or Legion.

This particular scenario utilizes a different Command Card Deck than the original C & C Ancients Deck. Eight (8) Cards are removed from the original deck leaving 52 Cards for scenario play. This new deck is called the “Marian Deck” and it is named after Caesar’s uncle Gaius Marius who reorganized the Roman Legions in roughly 105-103BC (several years before Caesar was born) to meet the challenges of the Germanic Tribal invasions that threatened the Roman Republic of the time.

The following eight cards are removed before play and put aside to create the Marian Deck:

X4 “Order Light troops”, x1 “I Am Spartacus”, x2 “Move-Fire-Move”, x1 “Mounted Charge”---note that one Mounted Charge” card is still retained in the deck.

Leader Command, Caesar, & Rally Special Rules:

Caesar can cancel **both** a retreat **and** a sword hit if present with the unit receiving such hits.

Units on both sides 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, unless Caesar is the supporting leader---than up to two helmet hits may be counted

Caesar when moving & ordered by himself without an attached unit normally may move up to four hexes instead of the regular three hexes for Leaders in the rulebook.

Roman and Helveti units and the Rally Card: No Helveti unit can be rallied to beyond four blocks or its strength at the start of the game whichever is less. No Roman unit can be rallied to beyond five blocks or its strength at the start of the game whichever is less. If a Player rolls “swords” when attempting to rally he may freely chose which unit gets a block back.

Terrain Special Rules:

Level 1 & Level 2 Hill Tiles: The map now, in effect, has contour lines of hexes showing different elevations. Basically there are three Terrain elevations in the scenario: Level 0: which includes all clear, forest, and broken terrain on the map. Level 1: which includes all Level 1 Hills, and Level 2 which includes all Level 2 Hills. Note: The Camp/Rampart tiles are a special separate case which are handled by the rule detailed below.

Elevation effect on close-combat and battle-back: If a unit is close-combating or battling-back against a unit at a higher elevation (or level) the “normal” maximum dice that unit may use is two (2). If a unit is close-combating or battling-back against a unit at a lower elevation (or level) the “normal” maximum dice that unit may use is three (3). **If both** units are on the same level and there is no other terrain considerations the units would use their standard dice as dictated by the rulebook and these scenario rules.

Elevation effect on Line of Sight and Missile Fire: Units firing missiles from a lower level to a target on a higher level have a maximum range of two hexes—the three hex range for light archers and light slingers in this situation may not be utilized.

Line of Sight: A Line of sight is blocked if the line passes through any hexes whose elevation is higher than both the spotting unit and its target. A Line of Sight is also blocked if it passes through two or more hexes of the same elevation and one of the hexes in the line of sight is lower than the two hexes at the same elevation. Examples: A unit in Hex I6 cannot “see” for missile fire purposes a unit in I4 or I3. A unit in I5 can “see” units in I3, and I2 for missile fire purposes.

Roman Camp & Rampart Tiles: The initial Roman Camp/Rampart Tiles only benefit the Roman player—if these hexes are entered by a Helveti units the Camp/Rampart tile is removed from the map—and replaced by a Level 1 Hill Hex Tile. Each Roman Camp/Rampart tile so removed scores the Helveti Player one banner towards victory. Roman Rampart Tiles block line of sight in this scenario. Use the other normal Camp/Rampart rules as detailed in the rulebook—Camp/Rampart hex tiles while they exist are assumed to be at the same elevation level as the adjacent hills in A6/A7 (and any Level 1 Hills created from former Camp/Rampart hex tiles) for close-combat purposes & missile fire in or out of those hexes

Helveti Special Rules & Units:

Helveti Elite Warriors: All Helveti 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 at the instant it rolls in either combat or battle-back.

Helveti Line Commands: The maximum number of units the Helveti Player may move/order with a Line Command Card is five units.

“Barbarian Rush”: **Limits to Helveti Momentum Combat:** Warrior units, regardless of type, **reduced** to one or two blocks **May Not Engage** in momentum combat unless a friendly leader is attached to the unit in question.

“Barbarian Balk”: If a Warrior unit (of whatever type) moves 2 hexes (or 3 hexes using “Double Time”) to a hex adjacent to a Roman unit(s) to close combat it and then is unable to do so due to the Roman unit(s) being retreated or eliminated by other attacks, the Helveti unit has failed its requirement to close-combat attack given the length of its pre-combat move.

Such units that fail to attack are said to have “balked”—immediately retreat Warrior units in such a situation one hex once all Helveti close combats are finished. The one hex “Barbarian Balk” retreat is conducted in the normal fashion just as if the unit was forced to retreat one hex after a battle—and it is not optional and cannot be canceled **in any way**—even by the presence of a leader.

Helveti Wagon Train & Baggage Escort:

Helveti one block Wagon units have the following special characteristics:

- a) They have no movement capability, may not initiate close combat, or be ordered by a command card and if forced to retreat from the hex they start the game in they are eliminated. Roman Missile Fire never affects wagons.
- b) Another Helveti unit (and potentially a Helveti Leader) may stack with a Wagon unit in the same hex.
- c) Wagons may if attacked while alone battle back with one dice, if stacked with a Helveti unit, that unit battles back in lieu of the Wagon at +1 normal dice. A Wagon stacked with a unit and in a hex attacked by the Romans in close combat, or missile fire is not affected by combat results while that unit is in the hex with them. Only the unit itself (and any stacked with leader) is potentially affected.
- d) Helveti units that start the game stacked with or adjacent to a Wagon unit may not be ordered by the Helveti Player (or attacked by the Roman Player in any way) **until three** complete Roman Player-turns have been executed.

Roman Legionary Special Rules & Units:

Roman Pilum:

Each Roman Heavy & Medium Infantry unit starts with a Pilum Marker. The Pilum is a one-time use weapon that is generally fired **right before** a Roman unit attacks in close-combat or is itself attacked by the enemy in close-combat. Once the pilum is fired –the

Pilum marker is removed from the Roman unit to indicate that the pilum has been expended and the unit may not throw Pilum for the rest of the battle.

Just before a Roman unit with pilum is attacked or is itself attacked by the enemy for the very first time in the battle in close-combat it throws its pilum—roll one die and apply normal hits for the color, swords, or a Flag/retreat hit Afterwards remove the Pilum marker. The act of throwing the pilum **is not** considered to be part of the Close-Combat—so any result of the pilum throw is resolved before the Close-combat and may affect the number of dice available in the upcoming close combat.

Roman units, adjacent to the enemy, that have not expended their Pilum may also be ordered to throw Pilum if the card “Darken the Sky” is played by their commanding player. The Roman Player picks one adjacent enemy unit and throws two dice—apply the results just as one would before close combat—and remove the Pilum Marker.

Roman Relief Moves & Cohort Maneuvers:

Adjacent Roman Heavy and Medium Infantry, instead of moving, may switch places in a “Relief/Cohort Maneuver”. Relief/Cohort Maneuvers may only be conducted through the play of Section cards ONLY. Instead of ordering one unit via a section card, the Roman Player may order a pair of adjacent Heavy/ Medium Infantry units to switch hexes—at least one of the units switching places must not be adjacent to an enemy unit. A unit that switched places via the Relief/Cohort Maneuver into a hex adjacent to the enemy may close combat in the same player-turn.

Roman Recruit Units:

The four Roman Medium Infantry units that start with four blocks each in Hex Row “A” are considered to be the newly recruited Legions that Caesar had placed to guard his baggage and camp.

When battling back these units “normally” only throw 3 dice. These Recruit units may not be ordered by the Roman Player to move or attack out of the initial Roman Camp/Rampart trace **until four** complete Roman Player-turns have been executed.

Outflanking---*This is an easy way of introducing facing and flanks to the game with little fuss—it can be retrofitted to other scenarios where appropriate:*

A unit is said to be “Outflanked” if it is surrounded **in all** six adjacent hexes by either enemy units, or hexes adjacent to an enemy unit. The presence of friendly units or impassable terrain does not negate an “Outflanked” situation **in any way**. Units on the board edges (and not surrounded by six adjacent hexes) **cannot** be “Outflanked”.

Effects of being Outflanked: “Outflanked” units when battling back roll only half the normal number of dice they would be normally entitled to rounded up—to a maximum of only two dice—“Outflanked” units when battling back **never** hit on helmet rolls even if supported by a leader. A unit’s “Outflanked” situation is judged at the instant it battles back.