

The Battle of Lutetia 52BC: Labienus vs. the Parisii & Other Gallic Tribes

Historical Background: (the selection below is derived from two separate translations of Caesar's "Gallic Wars" Book 7)

"While these things are being done by Caesar, Labienus, leaving at Agendicum the recruits who had lately arrived from Italy, to guard the baggage, marches with four legions to Lutetia (which is a town of the Parisii, situated on an island on the river Seine), whose arrival being discovered by the enemy, numerous forces arrived from the neighboring states. The supreme command is intrusted to Camalugenus one of the Aulerci, who, although almost worn out with age, was called to that honor on account of his extraordinary knowledge of military tactics. He, when he observed that there was a large marsh which communicated with the Seine, and rendered all that country impassable, encamped there, and determined to prevent our troops from passing it. "

"Labienus at first attempted to raise Vineae, fill up the marsh with hurdles and clay, and secure a road. After he perceived that this was too difficult to accomplish, he issued in silence from his camp at the third watch, and reached Melodunum by the same route by which he came. This is a town of the Senones, situated on an island in the Seine, as we have just before observed of Lutetia. Having seized upon about fifty ships and quickly joined them together, and having placed soldiers in them, he intimidated by his unexpected arrival the inhabitants, of whom a great number had been called out to the war, and obtains possession of the town without a contest. Having repaired the bridge, which the enemy had broken down during the preceding days, he led over his army, and began to march along the banks of the river to Lutetia. The enemy, on learning the circumstance from those who had escaped from Melodunum, set fire to Lutetia, and order the bridges of that town to be broken down: they themselves set out from the marsh, and take their position on the banks of the Seine, over against Lutetia and opposite the camp of Labienus."

"Caesar was now reported to have departed from Gergovia; intelligence was likewise brought to them concerning the revolt of the Aedui, and a successful rising in Gaul; and that Caesar, having been prevented from prosecuting his journey and crossing the Loire, and having been compelled by the want of corn, had marched hastily to the province. But the Bellovaci, who had been previously disaffected of themselves, on learning the revolt of the Aedui, began to assemble forces and openly to prepare for war. Then Labienus, as the change in affairs was so great, thought that he must adopt a very different system from what he had previously intended, and he did not now think of making any new acquisitions, or of provoking the enemy to an action; but that he might bring back his army safe to Agendicum. For, on one side, the Bellovaci, a state which held the highest reputation for prowess in Gaul, were pressing on him; and Camalogenus, with a disciplined and well-equipped army, held the other side; moreover, a very great river separated and cut off the legions from the garrison and baggage. He, in consequence of such great difficulties being thrown in his way, realized that only resolute courage could save him."

“Towards evening he assembled his officers. Urging them to execute his orders with energy and care, he placed a Roman knight in charge of each of the boats which he brought from Metlosedum, and ordered them to move silently four miles downstream in the early part of the night and wait for him there. He detailed to guard the camp the five cohorts which he considered the least reliable in action, and told the remaining five of the same legion to start upstream with all the luggage shortly after midnight, making as much commotion as possible. He also requisitioned some smaller boats, which he sent in the same direction at high speed, with loud splashing of oars, and then himself moved quietly out of camp with the other three legions and marched downstream to the place where he ordered the main flotilla to put in.”

“The enemy patrols posted along the river were taken by surprise, because a sudden heavy storm concealed the approach of the legions, and both infantry and cavalry were quickly ferried across under the superintendence of the knights in charge of the boats. Just before dawn the enemy received several reports almost simultaneously – that there was an unusual commotion in the Roman camp, that a strong force was marching upstream, that the sound of oars was audible from the same direction, and that a little way downstream soldiers were being ferried across. They therefore divided their troops into three sections. One section remained on guard opposite the Roman Camp; a small force was dispatched towards Metlosedum with orders to advance upstream as far as the boats had gone; and the remainder were led against Labienus.”

“By dawn the whole of the three Roman legions were taken across and were in sight of the enemy. Labienus urged them to remember their long-standing tradition of courage and brilliant successes, and to imagine that Caesar, who had so often led them to victory, was present in person. He then gave them the signal to attack. At the very first onset the right wing, where the 7th legion was posted, drove back the enemy and put them to flight; on the left, where the 12th legion was, the enemy’s front rank were killed or disabled by missiles, but the rest put up determined resistance, and it was clear that not a single one of them had any thought of flight. Camulogenus was there in person encouraging his men. The issue still hung in the balance, when the 7th legion, whose military tribunes had received a report of what was happening on the left wing, appeared in the enemy’s rear and charged. Even then not a single Gaul gave ground; all of them, including Camulogenus, were surrounded and killed. The detachment left on guard opposite Labienus’ camp, on hearing that a battle was being fought, went to lend a hand and occupied a hill, but could not withstand the charge of the victorious Romans and joined their fleeing comrades. All who could not escape into the woods or hills were killed by the cavalry. On completion of this action Labienus returned to Agedincum, where he had left all the baggage, and then rejoined Caesar with his entire force.”

Terrain

X9 Unfordable River tiles (the Seine River near the center of modern-day Paris): A1, B1, C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, H1, I2

X10 Hill Tiles: B4, B12, A13, E11, G13, G5, H4, H5, H8, I10

X10 Forest Tiles: B2, B10, D12, F12, G8, G11, H11, I7, I8, I13

X3 Swamp Tiles: (use broken Terrain tiles—see special rules): H2, E3, C3

Initial Setup:

Roman Army:

X6 Heavy Infantry (all 5 Blocks-Roman Legionary units see special rules):

B4, B5, A5, B8, B9, A9

X3 Medium Infantry (all 5 Blocks-Roman Legionary units see special rules):

B7, B6, A7

X1 Light Archers: B10

X2 Medium Cavalry: B3, B11

X2 Leaders: B6(Labienus) B8 (Tribunes of the 7th Legion)

Gallic Army:

X13 Warriors:I3, I4, I5, I7, F4, F6, F8, F10, E6, E8, E9, E10, E11

X1 Elite Warriors (use Medium Infantry see Special Rules): E5

X2 Light Infantry: H2, E7

X1 Medium Cavalry: H9

X1 Leader (Camalugenus): E5

War Council

Roman Army:

Leader: Labienus

5 Cards

Move First –The Roman Player gets to Move twice before the Gallic Player can move—
than alternate normally—

Gallic Army:

Leader: Camalugenus

4 Cards

Victory:

Gallic Player Wins if he scores 5 Banners—Roman Player must score 9 Banners

Special Rules:

Command Rules:

Labienus can cancel **both** a retreat **and** a sword hit if present with the unit receiving such hits. The other two Leaders in the scenario may cancel a retreat **or** a sword hit if present with the unit.

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 Labienus is the supporting leader---then up to two helmet hits may be counted.

Units and the Rally Card: No 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.

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.

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 Veteran Initiative:

Up to Four Roman Heavy Infantry (and/or Elite Heavy Infantry) units per Roman Player-turn that are ordered by Line Commands or an “Order Heavy Troops” card may move two hexes and close combat at their option.

Special Terrain Rules:

Swamp tiles: Only Light foot units and Leaders may enter evade or retreat into or through Swamp tiles. For combat into and out of such hexes treat them as if they were Broken Ground hexes.

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.

Gallic Special Rules & Units:

Gallic Elite Warriors: The Gallic Medium Infantry unit is treated as regular Warriors **for all** purposes, but these 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.

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

“Barbarian Rush”: Limits to Gallic 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 Gallic 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 Gallic 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.