

Mantineia 207 BC: The Achaean League vs. Sparta

Historical Background:

Machanidas, Tyrant of Sparta, was blocked in his invasion of Achaea by Philopoemen's army just outside the city of Mantineia. The League's army took station behind a ditch located per Polybius about 2,000 paces from the city. Machanidas deployed his war machines (these were probably bolt throwers) in front of his army and began to peck away at the opposing phalanx on the other side of the ditch. In response the Achaean left flank cavalry and light troops moved forward to attack the Spartan right flank. According to Polybius, the League forces on this side of the field were quickly repulsed and Machanidas led his troops in pursuit towards the nearby city. Philopoemen managed to wheel his phalanx leftwards along the ditch catching the pursuing Spartans in the flank. After a hard hand to hand fight the Spartan Army gave way, and Machanidas was killed in the debacle.

Terrain:

X9 "Ditch" Tiles (use River Tiles see special rules) E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10

X2 Forest Tiles: A9, A10

X11 Hill Tiles A1, C1, G1, H1, I13, H12, G13, F12, E13, D12, C13

X2 Rampart Tiles (Walls of Mantineia see special rules) I9, I10

Order of Battle and Initial Setup for Mantineia 207BC

Spartan Army: (use Roman Blocks)

X2 War Machines (each 2 blocks—see special rules below) C3, C8

X4 Heavy Infantry (Phalanx Infantry—see special rules below) B3, B4, B5, B6

X1 Medium Infantry (Phalanx Infantry—see special rules below) B7

X2 Auxillia (Mercenaries see special rules below) B8, B9

X1 Light Cavalry B1

X1 Medium Cavalry B11

X2 Light Infantry B2, B10

X2 Leaders: B9 (Machanidas) B4 (Alexidamus)

Achaean Army: (use Carthaginian Blocks)

X2 Heavy Infantry (Phalanx Infantry—see special rules below) F6, F7

X3 Medium Infantry (Phalanx Infantry—see special rules below) F3, F4, F5

X2 Auxillia (Mercenaries see special rules below) F8, F9

X1 Medium Cavalry F11

X1 Heavy Cavalry F2

X2 Light Infantry F10, G3

X2 Leaders: F2 (Philopoemen) F6 (Aristaenetus)

Strength notes: The best guess is that each army numbered about 15,000 men with the Spartans perhaps having a slight edge.

War Council:

Spartan Army:

Leader: Machanidas, Tyrant of Sparta

4 Command Cards

Move First

Achaean Army:

Leader: Philopoemen, General of the Achaean League

5 Command Cards

Victory:

Both sides: 6 Banners (however see “Walls of Mantinea” rule below). The Achaean Player scores only a ½ Banner each when he eliminates a Spartan War Machine unit.

Scenario Special Rules:

Special units Both Sides—Phalanx and Mercenaries

Phalanx Infantry: All Medium and Heavy Infantry units in the game are assumed to be Phalanx Infantry—even the Spartans seem to have been drawn up in somewhat similar style to the Macedonian phalanxes.

Phalanx Infantry may not engage in Close Combat if they have just moved before combat their maximum of one hex, (or two hexes if doing double time), **unless** the move was into the two hexes toward their “front” (i.e.: “front” as in towards the initial setup position of the opposing army) 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. **Exception:** A Phalanx unit may **always** conduct combat **into a ditch hex** after moving—regardless of direction moved or “front”.

Phalanx Infantry may engage in normal Momentum Movement and Momentum Combat regardless of the direction of the combat. Note: Non-moving Ordered Phalanx units may always engage in Close Combat in any direction.

Example of Front: A Spartan Phalanx unit in hex D9 has “front” hexes in E9 and E10. An Achaean Phalanx unit in E9 has ‘front’ hexes in D8 and D9.

Mercenary Peltasts: Both sides had large numbers of mercenary Peltasts representing the ancient Greek version of the “Dogs of War”, and who occupied a class of troop unit somewhat between the between the light javelin men and the phalanx. Therefore add the following rule detailed below for all Auxillia in the scenario:

All Auxillia on both sides in the battle may evade enemy phalanx infantry (see above) if attacked by them in close combat. Follow the normal rules for evasion found in the rulebook. Auxillia units located in ditch hexes when attacked in close combat **may never evade.**

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 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.

Terrain Considerations:

Walls of Mantinea: Cavalry units may not enter these hexes or close combat into them. Achaean Infantry units defending in these hexes add one to their normal dice when battling back from these hexes. If Spartan infantry units enter these hexes the tiles are removed upon entry and one Banner is scored for the Spartans for each such tile removed. The normal Rampart and Rampart facing rules are ignored for all purposes.

The Ditch: Units in ditch hexes when engaged in close combat attack and battle-back at one dice less than normal unless the unit they are engaged with is also in a ditch hex. The Ditch also impacts the mercenary and phalanx troop types as noted above. The Ditch has no other combat or movement effects.

Spartan War Machines

Spartan War Machines have the following special characteristics:

- a) They have no movement capability and if forced to retreat from the hex they start the game in they are eliminated.
- b) Another Spartan unit (and potentially a Spartan Leader) may stack with a Spartan War Machine in the same hex.
- c) War Machines may not battle back or engage in close combat, but a Spartan unit stacked with them certainly can. War Machines stacked with a unit and attacked in close combat are 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) An order given to a unit stacked with a War Machine also orders the War Machine for “free”.

War Machines, when ordered, may engage in missile combat only, at a range from one to three hexes—they are **the only** missile unit type that may fire when adjacent to an enemy unit. At one hex range to target one dice is rolled for the missile fire, which is conducted normally—at two to three hex range the War Machine rolls two dice.

Command Rules:

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

Philopoemen may cancel **both** a sword and a retreat hit if stacked with a friendly unit.

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, exception, if the leader is Philopoemen up to two helmets may be counted as hits.