

## **Battle of Pydna—June 22<sup>nd</sup>\*, 168 BC**

## **Phalanx vs. Legion III**

### Historical Background:

The action was started by accident during the afternoon when both sides were watering their horses on the opposite banks of the river Aeson. King Perseus, of Macedon, formed his phalanx in reaction to the resulting small skirmish and attacked across the river. Despite the efforts of the Roman commander, Lucius Aemilius Paulus, son of the Roman consul who died at Cannae in 216 BC, to organize his men, the phalanx swept forward on the flat terrain near the river, but was unable to keep its alignment in the rolling and broken terrain to the south of the initial combat zone. Aemilius counterattacked, taking advantage of gaps that had opened up in the Macedonian phalanx. Once the Romans penetrated the opposing formation the entire phalanx fell apart—Supposedly 20,000 Macedonian troops fell on the field and another 11,000 became captives; only a handful—including Perseus escaped. Roman losses by contrast were put by the annals at under 1,000. Perseus later surrendered and died as a prisoner of the Romans in Italy. The decisive Battle of Pydna marked the end of the Macedonian kingdom, shortly afterwards the entire kingdom was divided by the Romans into four separate so-called “republics”, all of them virtual Roman protectorates.

\*Note: The date of the battle is known to us from an eclipse of the moon the night before the battle. This was an omen the Romans considered favorable, it caused dismay among the Macedonians.

(the above was lifted largely, with some modifications from The Encyclopedia of Military History by R.E. and T.N. Dupuy)

### **Terrain:**

River Aeson (all hexes fordable) x12 tiles: H1, hexes G2 through G10 in a line, H10, I11

Hills (use forest for hills if needed) x18 tiles: C2, C3, C4, B2, B3, D5, C7, B7, C8, B9, D9, D10, C10, C11, F12, E12, E13, D12

Broken Ground: x5 tiles: C5, B5, D6, D7, C9

Roman Fortified Camp: x2 tiles: A5, A6

**Initial Setup:**

Macedonian Army: (Use Carthaginian Blocks)

X4 Heavy Infantry (these are Phalanx Infantry): H5, H6, H7, H8

X2 Medium Infantry: I8, I 5

X4 Auxillia: I4, H4, I9, H9

X2 Light Infantry: G8, G6

X1 Light Archers: H3

X1 Light Slings: G10

X1 Heavy cavalry: I3

X2 Medium Cavalry: I2, I10

X1 Light Cavalry: H2

X2 Leaders H4 (Perseus) H6 (Nicanor)

Roman Army:

X4 Heavy Infantry: C6, D6, C8, D8

X5 Medium Infantry: A5, C4, B7, C10, E7

X3 Auxillia: E5, E9, A6

X1 Light Infantry: E6

X3 medium Cavalry: D10, D3, C2

X2 Leaders: C6 (Aemilius Paulus) C8 (Legate)

**War Council:**

Macedonian Army:

Leader: Perseus

5 Command Cards (the initial hand should contain one Line Command card plus four cards drawn at random)

Move First—The Macedonian Player moves twice at the start of the game before the Roman Player takes his first move. The Players then take alternate turns as normal for the remainder of the game.

Roman Army:

Leader: Aemilius Paulus

5 Command Cards (all drawn at random)

**Victory:**

8 Banners The First Roman Green symbol light unit eliminated by the Macedonian Player scores no banner however (morale effect of the lunar eclipse). Also see 5) below for rules on the two fortified Roman Camp hexes and related banner scoring

**Special Scenario Rules:**

- 1) All Macedonian 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 H6 would have the following two hexes adjacent: G6 & G7 as its “front” hexes.

- 2) The Line Movement Card may only be utilized to move a maximum of 8 linked infantry units and their attached leader(s) (neither side in this unplanned and almost accidental battle were exactly arrayed, although the Macedonian side launched the first effective push of the fight).
- 3) Roman Auxilia Units may attempt to evade if attacked by a Macedonian Phalanx unit. In this case they evade exactly like any other green light infantry unit.
- 4) A Leader attached (stacked with) a friendly unit may cancel one sword hit on the unit **in lieu** of canceling a retreat hit.
- 5) 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.
- 6) The two fortified Roman Camp hexes only benefit the Roman player—if these hexes are entered by Macedonian units the first Macedonian unit to enter the hex loses one block (as men split off to loot) immediately, and the fortified camp tile is removed from the map—thereby converting the hex to clear. Each camp tile so removed scores the Macedonian Player one banner towards victory.