



Historical Background

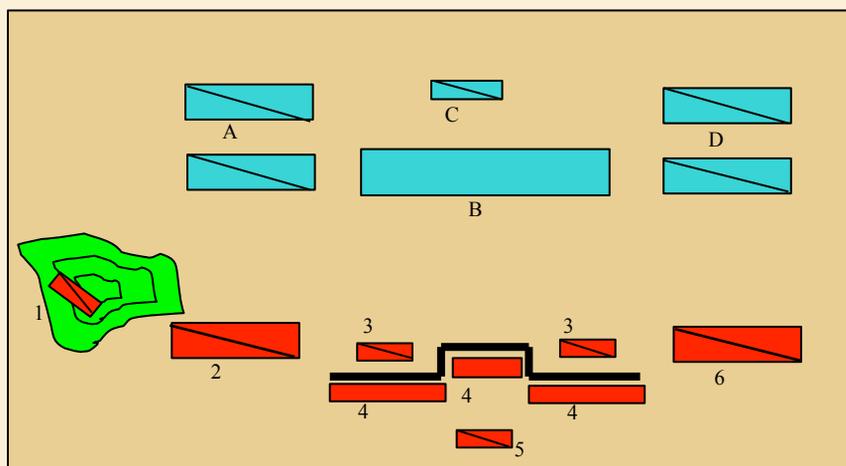
The young East Roman General Belisarius, in his first major command, was sent to defend the city of Daras from the Persians. His army of 25,000 men was demoralised as a result of a string of defeats against the Persians and they had come to view a Persian victory as inevitable. Belisarius dug a trench in front of the city to protect his unreliable infantry and deployed his cavalry on the two wings. The left wing was commanded by Bouzes, the right by 5 commanders (John, Cyril, Marcellus, Germanus and Dorotheus) while Belisarius and Hermogenes held the centre. Two groups of Massagetae (Huns) were deployed just in front of the trench to support the wings, and a group of 300 Heruls (Germans) under Pharas were concealed on a hill slope on the left, ready to charge down on the flank of the Persians.

The Persian army is said to have numbered 40,000 and was commanded by Perozes who had the title of *Mirranes*. The Persian right was under Pityaxes and the left under Baresmanas. After two days of inconclusive skirmishing, the Persians were reinforced by another 10,000 men and launched an attack on the Roman left. Prior to this, Persian champions issued two challenges to single combat, both of which were defeated by Andreas, one of Bouzes' personal attendants.

The Persians adopted a deep formation and attacked in two lines so as to keep up a constant rotation of fresh troops. Perozes kept the elite Immortals back as a reserve. The Persians got the best of the missile exchange, thanks to their line rotation and when arrows were exhausted they attacked. Pityaxes, leading a unit called the Cadiseni, drove back Bouzes' cavalry but was hit in the rear by Pharas who sprung his ambush from the hill. At the same time 600 Massagetae under Sunicas and Aigan moved in from the centre to attack the pursuing Persians. Pityaxes' men were routed with 3000 casualties and fell back to rally on their infantry centre.

Following the defeat of his right wing, Perozes sent his reserve to reinforce the left wing and attacked there. The Persians succeeded in routing the Roman right wing but Belisarius again sent in another contingent of Massagetae, and his own reserve, to save the day. The Romans surrounded the pursuing Persians and killed 5,000 of them, including their commander Baresmanas. When the Persian left wing cavalry fell back the infantry panicked and ran.

Historical Deployment



- A. Pityaxes' cavalry in two lines
- B. Persian infantry
- C. Perozes and the Immortals
- D. Baresmanas' cavalry in two lines
- 1. Pharas' Heruls
- 2. Bouzes' cavalry
- 3. Massagetae
- 4. Roman infantry behind trench
- 5. Belisarius' reserve
- 6. Roman right wing cavalry

The Game

This game recreates the Persian right wing attack. It is virtually an all-cavalry action in which the object is for the Persians to thoroughly defeat the Roman left, ideally without having to commit the reserves. It can be played with two players, taking on the roles of Bouzes and Pityaxes or with additional players for any of the other Leaders.



Belisarius deployed his infantry behind trenches with detachments of Massagetae in front

Scale

1 Infantry stand = 600 men
1 Cavalry stand = 300 men

Roman Order of Battle

The Roman army must include:

1 General - Belisarius,

3 Commanders - Pharas, Bouzes and Hermogenes

24 cavalry stands and 8 -16 infantry stands chosen from the list below:

Belisarius' Reserve

General - Belisarius 5 CPs

Belisarius' Comitatus: 2-4 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, Partial Armour, Exceptional Morale

Bouzes' Command

Commander - Bouzes, Dice for CPs

Bouzes' Comitatus: 1-2 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, High Morale

Foederati: 2-6 Shock Cavalry, A Grade, Average Morale

Roman Cavalry: 6-10 Heavy Horse Archers, A Grade, Average Morale

Massagetae Cavalry: 0-4 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, High Morale

Hermogenes Command

Commander - Hermogenes, Dice for CPs

Hermogenes' Comitatus 1-2 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, High Morale

Roman Infantry 4-8 Roman Infantry, C Grade, Armoured, Poor Morale

Roman Archers 4-8 Foot Archers, C Grade, Poor Morale

Pharas' Command

Commander - Pharas, 4 CPs

Pharas' Comitatus 1 Germanic Cavalry, B Grade, Exceptional Morale



Persian Order of Battle

The Persian army must include:

- 1 General - Perozes
- 1 Commander - Pityaxes
- 1 additional commander
- 40 Cavalry chosen from the list below.

The Persians may add 2 more cavalry stands for each heavy infantry stand above 4 in the Roman army and an additional 1 cavalry for every light infantry stand above 4 in the Roman army



Reserve

General - Perozes dice for CPs

Perozes' Comitatus 1 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, Armoured. Exceptional Morale

Immortals 2-4 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, Armoured, High Morale

Two other Commands from the following:

Commander - Pityaxes, Dice for CPs

Additional Commander, Dice for CPs

Pityaxes' Comitatus 1-2 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, Armoured, Exceptional Morale

Commanders' Comitatus 1-2 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, Armoured, High Morale

or 1-2 Light Horse Archers, A Grade, High Morale

Cadiseni 0-4 Cataphracts, B Grade, Armoured, High Morale

Clibanarii 16-20 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, Average Morale

Elite Clibanarii 2-4 Lance & Bow Cavalry, B Grade, Armoured, High Morale

Light Cavalry 10-12 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Average Morale

Notes

The main Persian contingent is divided into two commands, representing the two lines with Pityaxes commanding the second line..

There is no evidence that the Cadiseni were cataphracts, players may choose to represent them by the elite clibanarii if they prefer.



There are actually no Persian infantry in this scenario - but it is a nice photograph!

Terrain and Deployment

The battle requires both breadth and depth to give sufficient room for manoeuvre, consequently it is probably best played in 15mm or smaller scale. 25/28mm is manageable but will require an 8' x 6' table or larger.

The Roman player sets up the terrain choosing from:

- 1 large hill covered with light scrub providing concealment but not difficult terrain
- 0-2 smaller hills
- 0-1 orchard or vineyard (providing concealment but not counting as difficult terrain)

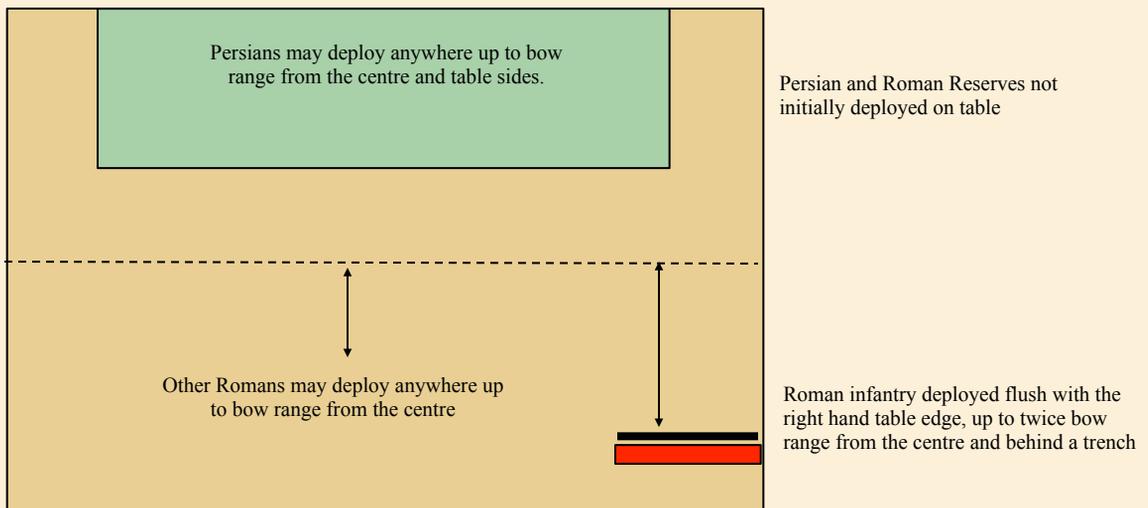
The Roman then chooses which side of the table he wishes to deploy on and sets up his troops according to the following guidelines:

Belisarius and the Reserve are off table to the rear of the Roman deployment area.

Pharas' command does not need to be set up. It may be concealed in the orchard or behind the hill or off table on the Roman left table edge. These troops need not be placed on table unless they move or shoot or until the Persians are within one javelin throw of them.

The Roman Infantry must be deployed flush with the right hand table edge, no closer than twice bow range from the centre line of the table. They have a trench in front of them which counts as a major obstacle.

Other Roman troops may be deployed anywhere on the Roman half of the table up to bow range from the centre line (no restrictions to the sides).



Once the on-table Roman troops are deployed the Persian sets up anywhere on his half of the table up to bow range from the centre line and table sides.

Special Rules

The Roman infantry may not initiate any charges.

No troops from Hermogenes' command are allowed to move from their initial deployment positions unless enemy troops are within bow range or Belisarius changes their orders. For this to happen, Bouzes must send a request for help to Belisarius (counts as sending orders) and then Belisarius must give orders to Hermogenes. Orders can either be passed by messenger or if the Leader figures are in base to base contact. If Belisarius is off table, the messenger is assumed to reach him as soon as he leaves the table.

Reserves may move on to the table any turn after the 3rd. To do so the player must roll a D6 in the command phase. If the result is 3-4 they arrive immediately, on a 2 they arrive the following turn and a 1 in two turns. Reserves may arrive in any formation measuring their moves from the table edge.

If Pharas' command is kept off table rather than hidden by terrain features, they must also dice to arrive using the same procedure. The Persian player can act with the knowledge of their imminent arrival in the case of a 1 or 2 being rolled on the assumption that scouts have located them.

The optional ammunition re-supply rule should be used.



Roman Heavy Horse Archers, These troops were the mainstay of the East Roman army in the 6th Century

Victory Conditions

The game ends at the completion of the 9th turn, or players can decide to end it when a conclusion is obvious. If it is not obvious, victory can be determined by adding or subtracting the following points:

Each enemy casualty	+2
Reserves Committed	-2
Each friendly A Grade Casualty	-1
Romans	+2

The side with the most points wins. If one side has twice as many points they win decisively. The Romans have a 2 point bonus, reflecting their lower numbers and the strategic requirement for the Persians to inflict serious damage. This bonus is lost if the infantry have been driven back from their trenches.

Reserves are deemed to have been committed if any of them (including the general) move on to the table. Since players are taking the roles of the wing commanders, they are encouraged to succeed without having to call in the reserves. Even if they are slightly getting the worst of it, it may be better strategically to concede and leave the reserves uncommitted to switch the attack to the opposite flank.