

Tribola 147 BC: Iberian Guerilla Warfare vs. the Legions of the Roman Republic

“A peculiar practice among the Iberians and particularly among the Lusitanians; for when their young men come to the bloom of their physical strength, those who are the very poorest among them in worldly goods and yet excel in vigor of body and daring equip themselves with no more than valor and arms and gather in the mountain fastnesses, where they form into bands of considerable size and then descend upon Iberia and collect wealth from their pillaging..” (Diodorus Siculus Book 5 Chapter 34)

Historical Background:

“...a few years later, in (circa) 148BC, the wheel of Roman treachery turned full circle. A new governor, Gaius Vetilius, had surrounded a force of ten thousand Lusitanian rebels. They were about to surrender when Viriathus, a minor guerrilla leader who had escaped the earlier Galba massacre (which happened during a supposed peace conference), rose in assembly to remind the Lusitanians of Roman promises and Roman deeds—and then to persuade them to an escape attempt....”

“During his retreat, Viriathus set up an ambush in a dense thicket. When these irregulars fell on the pursuing Romans, Viriathus doubled his main force back to the attack: (Appian says) ‘Vetilius himself was taken prisoner; and the man who captured him not knowing who he was, but seeing that he was old and fat, and considering him worthless, killed him. Of the 10,000 Romans, 6,000 with difficulty made their way to the city of Carpesus on the seashore’(From the two volume work: “War in the Shadows: The Guerilla in History” by Robert B. Asprey Volume I pages 23-24)

“Viriathus’s plan was simple, but effective. He had the Lusitanians line up outside the city gates, as if to give battle to the Romans. Keeping 1,000 of the best warriors in reserve, he then ordered the rest to scatter in different directions, with instructions to rendezvous in Tribola. Vetilius, unwilling to run down the fleeing raiders when Viriathus appeared to offer him an easy victory, did not give chase.”

“Viriathus and Vetilius fought a running battle for two days. The Lusitanian cavalry constantly attacked the Roman line, only to retreat before they could be effectively engaged—a strategy that Appian described as “dashing around on the (same) field”. After the second day, Viriathus and his men quit the field of battle under cover of darkness, moving quickly to join the rest of the Lusitanians at Tribola. “

“Vetilius followed, but was unable to keep up with the lightly armored Lusitanians. He tracked Viriathus deep into Lusitanian territory, walking into an ambush—nearly half the legionaries who entered the Lusitanian highlands never returned—Vetilius among them.”

“Thus began an eight-year guerilla campaign on the part of the Lusitanians, under Viriathus’s able leadership...” (The above overview was from Ancient Warfare magazine Volume I, Issue 4 page 20 in an article called ‘Flame of Freedom’ by Ed Healy)

Terrain Set-up (See Terrain Special Rules)

X26 Forest tiles: B4, B11, B12, C4, C6, C9, D5, D6, D7, D9, E5, E9, F1, F5, F8, F11, G1, G3, G12, H1, H3, H5, H9, H10, H12, I3

X11 Hill tiles: A3, B1, B2, C1, C2, C13, D1, D12, E13, F2, F3

X4 Broken Ground tiles: D2, A4, D11, F12

X1 Village Tile (Village of Tribola-use Battle Cry Buildings tile or camp tile): A8

X1 Marsh Tile: I8

Initial Setup:

Lusitanian Rebels: (Use Green Barbarian, or Carthaginian & Greek Blocks as appropriate)

X1 Warrior: C7

X2 Medium Infantry : D6, D7

X4 Auxillia: (See Special Rules): E5, E9, E10, A8

X4 Light Infantry: F3, D5, C9, F11

X1 Light Cavalry: E11

X1 Medium Cavalry: (See Special Rules): D4

X1 Elite Medium Cavalry (**4 Blocks** See Special Rules): D8

X1 Leader: D8 (Viriathus)

Roman Army:

X2 Heavy Infantry: H6, G7

X4 Medium Infantry: F7, G6, I7, H7

X2 Auxillia: G5, H9

X2 Light Infantry: G9, F6

X2 Medium Cavalry: H4, G8

X1 Leader: G6 (Gaius Vetilius)

War Council:

Lusitanian Rebels:

Leader: Viriathus

5 Command Cards

Move First

Roman Army:

Leader: Vetilius

2 Command Cards to start with (at the end of the 1st Roman Turn 2 cards are drawn boosting the Roman hand to 3 cards—at the end of the 3rd Roman turn 2 cards are also drawn bringing the Roman hand to 4 cards—their maximum for the remainder of the game)

Victory: 6 Banners, scored in the normal way, however the Romans receive one Banner if they have a unit occupying the village of Tribola—they lose that Banner if the unit is driven out, moves out and is not replaced with another Roman unit immediately that player-turn, or is eliminated. Once lost that Banner cannot be regained.

Special Scenario Rules:

Roman Minimum Move: The Roman Player may always discard any one card from his hand and use that card to order any one of his units in lieu of taking a normal turn. At the end of this “minimum move” he draws another card as normal.

Lusitanian Rebel Force Rules:

Lusitanian Auxillia: Lusitanian Auxillia may evade if attacked by Roman Heavy or Medium infantry.

Lusitanian Medium Cavalry: Lusitanian Medium Cavalry may evade just like Light Cavalry, additionally they have the same missile capability as Light Cavalry.

Line Commands in the Scenario: No more than **five units** can be moved by play of a single Line Command Card in the scenario for both sides Roman and Lusitanian.

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.

Terrain Special Rules:

Village of Tribola: Units defending in the village ignore one Sword **and** one Flag hit when defending in close-combat and also battle back when attacked with one extra dice. The village blocks line of sight and may be attacked via missile fire generated only by a unit that **has not** moved—the not moving/missile firing unit may only roll one die when firing on a unit in the village—any Flag hits generated by missile fire directed at a unit in the village are always ignored.

Forest Hexes: Use Normal Rules, **however** **Lusitanian light foot units** entering such hexes via ordered moves **may attack** during the same player-turn.

All other terrain in the game uses the rules found in the rule-book.