

Tony Bath's Battle of the Trimos River: from the Hyborian Age Campaign

Hyborian Bloodbath & Beyond: The "Historical" Background of Tony Bath: (Via Wikipedia—the story of one of wargaming's good ole boys)

Tony Bath (1926-2000) was a British [wargamer](#) who favored the ancient period. His Hyboria campaign, based on the [Conan the Barbarian](#) stories of [Robert E. Howard](#), is sometimes cited as the first fantasy wargame. It is even said to have included [role playing](#) elements. The Hyboria campaign **did not contain** magic or fantastic creatures, however.

The Tony Bath Backstory:

After serving in [World War II](#), Bath began collecting military figures. In 1955 he joined the [British Model Soldier Society](#). About this time he began wargaming, introducing [Don Featherstone](#) to the hobby. Bath contributed articles to [Jack Scruby's](#) seminal newsletter, the *War Game Digest*, and in 1960 he began editing the British edition of the newsletter with Featherstone. He also contributed articles to the *Wargamer's Newsletter* which Featherstone started in 1962. When Bath began playing wargames set in the ancient period, the only miniatures available were German flats which were difficult to procure. As the period became more popular with hobbyists, Bath's rules were the ones most often used in ancient wargames. In 1966 Featherstone published Bath's rules for ancient, medieval, and 18th century warfare in three separate pamphlets, part of a set of rulebooks covering eight historical epochs. Bath founded the [Society of Ancients](#) in 1965. In 1973 his *Setting up a Wargames Campaign* was published by the [Wargames Research Group](#). He worked as a manager for [Miniature Figurines, Ltd.](#), helping them expand their selection of ancient and medieval miniatures.

Joe Bisio's Memories of the Trimos River Battle Scenario: Hyperborea vs. Hyrkania:

I was a wee wargamer of about 12 years of age when my father returned from a trip to the UK with one of Donald Featherstone's early tabletop wargaming works. Contained within this wonderful book was Tony Bath's mythical Hyborian Age battle of the River Trimos as part of a demonstration of his early 1960's era Ancients miniatures rules. I have reconstructed this scenario mainly from memory in terms of the Commands & Colors Ancients system, units, and rules. Tony Bath's backstory to the battle was very simple-minded in the extreme ...one great nation had offered another an intolerable insult—the two countries, Hyperborea and Hyrkania, each despatched a punitive expedition to the arid banks of the Trimos River region to exact some type of satisfaction. The two armies manage to stumble into each other at a place where two stone bridges spanned the river. In the Featherstone book Hyrkrania ended up the winner after a bloody battle in which the Hyperborean flanking move over the river by the chariots and the Elite Mounted Archers broke down at The New Bridge under the heavy fire of the Hyrkanian Imperial Archers. Meanwhile in the center the swift advance of the Hyrkanian Elephant Corps mauled two Hyperborean Infantry regiments before the remaining Hyperborean foot forces counterattacked from their hill position on 'The Pimple' (the large 5 hex size hill mass in my set-up). After a massive foot melee in front of the hill and a cavalry engagement nearby on the flank, the Hyperboreans broke and retreated from the field. The exhausted Hyrkanian army rested on its arms that night and tended to their wounded.

Terrain Setup:

Course of the Trimos River: A2, B2, C3, D2, E3, F3, G3, H2, I2
x2 Ramparts (or walls) one in C4 (faces C3/D3) one in D4 (faces D3/E4/E5)
x2 Bridges (The Old Bridge at H2 & The New Bridge at C3) on the Trimos River
x2 Fords at A2 & F3 on the Trimos River—these are the Fordable hexes
x7 Hills: E7, E8, E10, E11, F9, F10, G10

Hyperborean Army OB: Use Greek Blocks: (Note that Tony Bath's Regimental designations for the units are noted from my memory of the original units in his scenario)

Setup: First in hexes in rows H and I –Free Setup, may setup on the Old Bridge
X2 Elite Light Horse Archers (Hyperborean Mounted Archers)
X2 Elite Heavy Cavalry (Guards Cavalry)
X2 Heavy Chariots (Chariot Corps)
X2 Light Archers (The Thurn Archers)
X4 Medium Infantry (1st & 2nd Gwalur Infantry)
X2 Heavy Infantry (The Thurn Infantry)
X1 Heavy War Machine
X1 Leader (Hyperborean General)

Hyrkanian Army OB: Use Carthaginian/Roman Blocks: (Note that Tony Bath's Regimental designations for the units are noted from my memory of the original units in his scenario)

Setup: Second in non-river hexes in rows A and B –Free Setup
X4 Medium Cavalry (Fort Ghorri Cavalry & Imperial Horse)
X2 Elephants (Elephant Corps)
X6 Heavy Infantry (1st 2nd & 3rd Imperial Foot Guards)
X2 Light Archers (The Imperial Archers)
X1 Heavy War Machine
X1 Light War Machine
X1 Leader (Hyrkanian General)

War Council (Command Cards are drawn after setup)

Hyperborean Army:

Leader: Hyperborean General
5 Command Cards

Hyrkanian Army:

Leader: Hyrkanian General
4 Command Cards

Move First

Victory: 8 Banners

Scenario Special Rules:

- 1) Light Foot Archer units may not evade, but battle-back **only** with 3 dice.
- 2) Remove **all** the Order Light Troops(x4 Cards) and the two Move-Fire-Move cards from the Command Deck—leaving a 54 Card Command Deck for the scenario.
- 3) Elite Hyperborean Light Horse Archer units hit on swords in both close combat attacks & battle-back—**additionally** they are not affected by enemy sword hits. Treat as Medium Cavalry both in retreat distance and for close-combat/battle back dice (they ‘normally’ roll 3 dice in those situations **not** 2 dice). This unit may evade normally.
- 4) Elite Hyperborean Heavy Cavalry units are not affected by enemy sword hits.
- 5) Heavy War Machine range is 5 hexes maximum only. Ordered Heavy War Machines must roll a normal 6-sided dice before they fire each time to see if they are ‘ready’ to fire...on a ‘3-6’ they fire normally—on a ‘1-2’ they are not ready and don’t fire—the order is wasted in that case. Heavy War Machine units hit on ‘swords’ when missile firing except if the type targeted ignores swords normally in close-combat.
- 6) Light War Machine range is 4 hexes maximum only. An Ordered Light War Machine must roll a normal 6-sided dice before they fire each time to see if they are ‘ready’ to fire...on a ‘2-6’ they fire normally—on a ‘1’ they are not ready and don’t fire—the order is wasted in that case.
- 7) Close-Combat/Battle-back into or out of Bridge hexes is at -1 dice below ‘normal’
- 8) The River is impassable **except** at the Bridges & and the two Fordable hexes (A2 & F3). Bridge hexes may be entered/attacked into from any adjacent non-river hex. Bridges do not block line of sight.

9) 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.

- 10) The Hyperborean General/Leader may move up to four hexes when ordered to move without a unit (moving by himself). Leader units on both sides in close-combat or battle-back may **only** benefit units they are directly stacked with (but see the optional regimental rules below for an exception).

Optional Regimental Rules:

In the original Tony Bath game the Ancient flat figurines Mr. Bath used to represent both armies were divided into regimental units vaguely reminiscent of those of the British Army. The optional rule below models from my memory the organizational aspects of his original scenario. The players will have to make up markers to distinguish which unit is part of which regiment. Each regiment consists of two same type component units. Not all units in the scenario are considered part of a regiment. Elephants, War Machines, and Leaders on both sides are not considered to be part of any regiment.

Hyperborean Army Regiments & component Regimental units:

Hyperborean Mounted Archers: x2 Elite Light Horse Archer units
Hyperborean Chariot Corps: x2 Heavy Chariot units
Hyperborean Guard Cavalry: x2 Elite Heavy Cavalry units
The Thurn Archers: x2 Light Foot Archers
The Thurn Infantry: x2 Heavy Infantry
1st Gwalur Infantry: x2 Medium Infantry
2nd Gwalur Infantry: x2 Medium Infantry

Hyrkanian Army Regiments & component Regimental units:

1st Imperial Foot Guards: x2 Heavy Infantry units
2nd Imperial Foot Guards: x2 Heavy Infantry units
3rd Imperial Foot Guards: x2 Heavy Infantry
The Imperial Archers: x2 Light Foot Archers
Fort Ghorri Cavalry: x2 Medium Cavalry
Imperial Horse: x2 Medium Cavalry

Regimental Setup, Combat, and Cohesion Rules:

Special Setup Note: In the initial setup the two component units of a regiment **must** set-up within one or two hexes of each other.

- a) A unit that is adjacent to the other unit from the same regiment is automatically considered to be supported for purposes of ignoring retreats; there is no need to have a second unit adjacent for that supporting purpose. The two regimental units mutually support each other when in adjacent hexes.
- b) A foot unit that made a momentum move/advance into a hex vacated by an enemy unit may make a momentum attack **from that hex if its still adjacent** to the other unit of the regiment, however only one momentum attack per advanced unit can be made per turn. A second momentum attack after a second advance is still prohibited for the same unit in the same player-turn. This rule allows foot units to make momentum attacks without the presence of a Leader with the advanced unit.
- c) When battling back **only** if a regimental unit is not adjacent to the other unit of its regiment, it battles back with one die less than 'normal'.
- d) A Leader stacked with one unit of a regiment **may support the other component unit** of the regiment in close-combat/battleback if that other unit is adjacent.

Trimos River OB Notes: In the original Tony Bath scenario Cavalry Regiments had 15 figures and Infantry Regiments had 20 figures—so each troop block in our Trimos River C & C Ancients scenario equates to very roughly two and one half figures of the original Tony Bath Order of Battle. Each army had roughly 30 cavalry and 80 infantry figures plus the applicable war engines, chariots, and elephant models on the original tabletop.

Optional “Historical” Setup (From Memory) of the Trimos River Battle:

Scenario Note: This is the approximate original setup of the units as they were shown in the Featherstone book.

Hyperborean Army “Historical” Setup: Set-up First

X2 Elite Light Horse Archers (Hyperborean Mounted Archers): I1, H1

X2 Elite Heavy Cavalry (Guards Cavalry): H11, H12

X2 Heavy Chariots (Chariot Corps): H2, H3

X2 Light Archers (The Thurn Archers): H9, I9

X4 Medium Infantry & X2 Heavy Infantry (1st & 2nd Gwalur Infantry & The Thurn Infantry): Setup in any of these six hexes: I7, H6, H7, H8, I10, H10

X1 Heavy War Machine: I8

X1 Leader (Hyperborean General): Setup anywhere in rows H & I

Hyrkanian Army “Historical” Setup: Setup Second

X4 Medium Cavalry (Fort Ghorri Cavalry & Imperial Horse): A11, B12, A12, A13

X2 Elephants (Elephant Corps): B6, B7

X6 Heavy Infantry (1st 2nd & 3rd Imperial Foot Guards): A3, A4, B8, B9, A8, A9

X2 Light Archers (The Imperial Archers): B4, A5

X1 Heavy War Machine: A7

X1 Light War Machine: A6

X1 Leader (Hyrkanian General): Setup anywhere in rows A & B