

The Battle for Albania 65 BC—From Pompey’s Campaigns in the Caucasus

Historical Note: The Albanians were one of the 14 peoples of the East that Pompey claimed to have defeated at his grand triumph in Rome in 61 BC. Pompey (from 67 BC onwards) also closed down the pirates of the Mediterranean, finished out the 3rd Mithridatic War with King Mithridates and his royal relations in Armenia, then campaigned against the Iberians, Albanians, and various other tribes of the Caucasus area, saw to the political settlement of Syria and other kingdoms of the East, besieged Jerusalem and invaded the Jewish temple, and finally (circa 63 BC) conducted a punitive expedition against the Nabataeans in a desert region which is today part of the Kingdom of Jordan.

Historical Background:

“Oroeses (the Albanian king) had mustered a sizeable army, numbering some 60,000 foot and 22,000 horse according to Strabo, although Plutarch gives the number of cavalry as 12,000. Roman numbers are not stated in our sources, but may well have been substantially less than the 40-50,000 Pompey had mustered against Mithridates in the previous year. Many troops were needed to act as garrisons or to mop up the last fragments of resistance in the recently conquered territory, whilst the problems of supplying men and animals in the often difficult terrain anyway discouraged the use of too large a force. Pompey may have had a force half the size of the one he led in 66 BC and could well have been heavily outnumbered by the Albanians. The latter certainly had an advantage in cavalry, some of whom were heavily armored cataphracts, and Pompey needed to find some way of dealing with these as the king, obviously intent on forcing a pitched battle, advanced to meet him.”

“Throwing out his own horsemen as a screen, he (Pompey) advanced down on to a level plain flanked by hills. Some of his legionaries were concealed in defiles on this high ground, the men covering their bronze helmets with cloth to prevent the sun from reflecting on the metal and giving away their position. Other cohorts of legionaries knelt down behind the cavalry, so that they could not be seen from the front. Oroeses advanced against what seemed to be no more than a line of horsemen. Pompey repeated another tactic he had used against Mithridates, ordering his cavalry to attack boldly and then, feigning panic, to withdraw. The Albanian cavalry pursued them eagerly...and as they did so lost much of their order. The Roman auxiliary horsemen retired through the gaps between the infantry cohorts, which then stood up. Suddenly the Albanians were faced with a fresh and well-formed line of infantry who came forward against them, yelling their battle cry. Behind the legionaries the Roman Cavalry rallied and moved round behind the line to attack the enemy flanks, whilst more cohorts emerged from the concealing defiles to threaten the enemy rear. The position of the Albanian army was hopeless, but in spite of this the warriors appear to have fought very hard. One account claims that Pompey fought hand to hand with the king’s brother and killed him in the best traditions of Alexander the Great or Marcellus. Although a hard fight, the battle proved decisive, for Oroeses soon accepted the peace terms imposed on him.”

(The above selection is from In the Name of Rome: The Men Who Won the Roman Empire by Adrian Goldsworthy pages 197-198)

Extended Map Set-up

The Albania 65 BC scenario uses an extended two-section map to better allow for the maneuvers and movements of both armies through and around the valley where the battle took place. Take a second C & C Ancients map and cut or fold it over lengthwise along the entire center of the “E” hex-row. The two maps are then abutted so that D1 on the now “half-map” is adjacent to A1 and A2 on the main full map; similarly D12 will end up adjacent to A12 and A13 on the main map. The play area is now 13 hexrows deep and 12 or 13 hexes wide depending on the hexrow. The main or full map is referred to as “Map 1” and the four row or half map is called:” Map 2” when charting the locations detailed below

Terrain Setup:

Map 1: x12 Hills: B1, C1, C2, D1, C13, D12, E13, F1, G1, H1, G13, I5

X2 Broken Ground: I3, E12

X4 Forest: I10, I11, I12, H11

Map 2: x7 Hills: D1, C1, B1, A1, A2, A12, C13

X1 Broken Ground: A11

X1 Forest: A4

Initial Set-up:

Roman Army: All Start on **Map 1** or off-map—x2 Medium Infantry & x2 Heavy Infantry and one of the Legate Leaders all start initially off-map.

X4 Medium Infantry (Legionary Infantry see Special Rules) G6, G8, x2 off-map

X4 Heavy Infantry (Legionary Infantry see Special Rules) G5, G9, x2 off-map

X2 Elite Heavy Infantry (5 blocks Legionary Infantry see Special Rules) G7, H6

X1 Light Archers: F10

X1 Light Slingers (Elite—see special rules): F3

X2 Auxillia: G4, G10

X3 Medium Cavalry (see Special Rules): F7, F6, F9

X1 Light Cavalry (see Special Rules): F4

X3 Leaders G7 (Pompey) G9 (Legate) off-map (Legate)

Albanian Army: The Albanians are an Oriental style army see Special Rules)

Use Eastern Kingdom and/or Greek(Blue) Blocks

X3 Heavy Cavalry (Cataphracts see Special Rules): **Map 1:**C6, C7, C5

X3 Medium Cavalry: **Map 1:**B9, B11, B4

X2 Light Cavalry: **Map 1:** B2, C8

X1 Light Horse Archers (see Special Rules) **Map 1:** C9

X3 Light Archers **Map 1:** A3, A6, A8

X1 Light Slingers: **Map 1:** A11

X3 Light Infantry: **Map 1:** A7 **Map 2:** D3, D10

X5 Auxillia (Levy Infantry see Special Rules) **Map 2:** D4, C4, B3, D11, C11

X4 Medium Infantry: **Map 2:** D6, D7, C6, C8

X1 Heavy Infantry: **Map 2:** C7

X1 Warriors: **Map 2:** D9

X3 Leaders **Map 2/** C7 (Oroeses) **Map 1/**C5 (Brother of Oroeses) **Map 2/**D9 (Noble)

War Council:

Roman Army: Leader: Pompey

6 Command Cards

Albanian Army: Leader: Oroeses

5 Command Cards **Move First**

Victory: Romans 11 Banners and Albanians 7 Banners—scored in the usual way

Special Scenario Rules:

Command Rules:

All Albanian & Roman Leaders may cancel a retreat **or** a sword hit if present with the unit. Units on both sides 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, unless Pompey is the supporting leader---then up to two helmet hits may be counted.. Only Pompey & Oroeses can support friendly units engaged in close-combat or battle-back on adjacent hexes—all the other Leaders can only support units they are stacked with in combat.

Units and the Rally Card:. No unit can be rallied to beyond five blocks or its strength at the start of the game whichever is less. If a Player rolls “swords” when attempting to rally he may freely chose which unit gets a block back.

Heavy & Medium Foot Special Ordered non-Combat Moves:

Heavy and Medium Foot units on both sides ordered to move **with any** card except “Double Time” or “Line Command” may move two hexes as long as they do not start or end or pass through hexes adjacent to enemy units. (*note: this rule was added to increase mobility on this extended map for both sides*).

Roman Legionary Infantry & other Special Roman Army Rules:

The following types of infantry units in the game on the Roman side are assumed to be Roman Legionaries: ALL Roman Heavy & Medium Infantry.

Roman Pilum:

Each Roman Legionary Infantry unit starts with a Pilum Marker. The Pilum is a one-time use weapon that is generally fired right before a Roman Legionary unit attacks in close-combat or is itself attacked by the enemy in close-combat. Once the Pilum is fired the Pilum marker is removed from the Roman unit to indicate that the Pilum has been expended and the unit may not throw Pilum for the rest of the battle.

Just before a Roman unit with Pilum is attacked or is itself attacked by the enemy for the very first time in the battle in close-combat it throws its Pilum—roll one die and apply normal hits for swords, color, or a Flag/retreat hit Afterwards remove the Pilum marker. The act of throwing the Pilum **is not** considered to be part of the Close-Combat—so any result of the Pilum throw is resolved before the Close-combat. An attached Leader may

use his special ability to cancel a “swords” hit that was inflicted via a Pilum hit (see special Command rules) on the unit he is stacked with.

Roman units, adjacent to the enemy, that have not expended their Pilum may also be ordered to throw Pilum if the card “Darken the Sky” is played by their commanding player. The Player picks one adjacent enemy unit and throws two dice –apply the results just as one would before close combat—and remove the Pilum Marker.

Roman Relief Moves & Cohort Maneuvers:

Adjacent and on the same side Roman Legionary Infantry & Roman Auxillia, instead of moving, may switch places in a “Relief/Cohort Maneuver”. Relief/Cohort Maneuvers may only be conducted through the play of Section cards ONLY. Instead of ordering one unit via a section card, the controlling Player may order a pair of adjacent Legionary Infantry and/or Roman Auxillia units to switch hexes—at least one of the units switching places must not be adjacent to an enemy unit. A unit that switched places via the Relief/Cohort Maneuver into a hex adjacent to the enemy may close combat in the same player-turn. A Roman Auxilla unit may switch places with Roman Legionary unit via the utilization of this rule and procedures.

Roman Veteran Initiative:

Up to Two Roman Legionary Heavy Infantry (and/or Elite Heavy Infantry) units per Roman Player-turn that are ordered by Line Commands or an “Order Heavy Troops” card may move two hexes and close combat at their option.

Roman Elite Mercenary Slingers

The Roman Slinger units hit on swords when executing missile fire & battle-back.

Roman Cavalry Discipline:

Roman Medium & Light Cavalry units only retreat two hexes per Flag result inflicted on (or taken voluntary) by them. Roman Cavalry units may make ordered moves through and evade through (in the first hex a two hex evasion) friendly foot units.

Elite Legionaries

Note two of the initial Roman Heavy Infantry units start the game with five blocks rather than the normal four blocks. These are crack veteran troops, they are treated as normal Roman Legionary Heavy Infantry for all other purposes, but have the advantage of an extra block and may rally back to a full five block strength through use of a rally card.

The Albanian Oriental Army Special Rules

Oriental Army: The Albanian Army is assumed to be a typical, but somewhat well trained Oriental ‘horde’, greatly outnumbering, but inferior in equipment, discipline, skill. and fighting spirit to the forces of the Roman Republic’s Legions---In Close Combat and Battle Back ALL Albanian units, save their Heavy Cavalry & **Warrior foot** make **no hits** on their enemies if Swords are rolled—**always** consider Swords to be a ‘miss’ when rolled by the Albanian Player unless the unit is a Cataphract Heavy Cavalry **or the Warrior foot** unit involved in the close-combat or battle-back.

Albanian Cataphracts: **ALL** Albanian Heavy Cavalry is heavily armored—therefore they always ignore the first sword hit inflicted upon them in close-combat or battle-back, or hits from missile or pilum fire. Albanian Heavy Cavalry may never evade battle, and unlike most other Albanian units hit on sword rolls as noted above.

Albanian Horse Archers: When missile firing at a three hex range Albanian Light Horse Archers do so with only 1 dice regardless of whether or not they have moved.

Albanian Levy Foot: All Albanian Auxillia have no missile fire capability. All Albanian Auxillia retreat 2 hexes per Flag result taken or inflicted upon them.

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.

Entry of initially off-map Roman units/leader onto the map:

In order to bring on all his off-map units and the initially off-map Legate Leader, the Roman Player may bring them on by playing **any Leadership Card (regardless of type or section)** in lieu of using the card to order units on the map. The off-map units/leader arrive in any vacant hex on the Roman mapboard right section in mapedge hexes numbered 1 (A1, B1, C1 etc .through to I1 on Map 1 or A1, B1, C1, D1 on Map 2). The arriving units/Leader enter those clear hexes as their initial entry hex and then move one hex and battle on their turn of entry. The Roman Player may not enter his off-map units/leader until his 3rd Player-turn or later.

Optional Rule: Albanian Initial Attack Imperative:

Note: This optional rule requires the Albanian Player to attack the Roman Cavalry just as the Albanians historically initially attempted to do when they were suckered in by Pompey’s stratagem).

On his very first Player-turn the Albanian Player must attempt to attack (regardless of any resulting Roman evasion) at least two different Roman cavalry units via close-combat. If he fails to do so the Roman Player immediately gains 2 Banners.