

## **Great Roman Civil War: Curio's Last Stand in the Bagradas Valley 49 BC**

### **Scenario Note:**

*Curio was a lieutenant of Caesar who was sent with four legions, after Caesar's entry into Rome in 49 BC, to secure both Sicily and Africa for Caesar. Sicily was easily occupied and Curio left two legions there and made a quick sea passage to Africa with the other two legions and 500 cavalry. After some initial successes against the local Pompeian commander Varus near Utica the bulk of Curio's army and Curio himself were trapped on a plain near the Bagradas river and utterly destroyed by the forces of the Numidian king Juba who had aligned himself with the Pompeian side.*

### **Historical Background:**

“He (Curio) then advanced a fairly long way. After about sixteen miles, since his army were worn out with their exertions, he halted. Saburra (King Juba's commander) gave his forces the signal; he marshaled the battle-line and began going around the ranks encouraging the men. He kept the infantry at a distance for the time being, using them merely for display, and put his cavalry into the actual battle-line. Curio rose to the occasion; he addressed his men, and called on them to place all reliance on their own bravery. There was no lack of courage or enthusiasm for battle, either among the infantry, tired as they were, or among the cavalry, although they were few in number and exhausted. There were, however, only two hundred cavalry, the rest having stopped on the way. Wherever they attacked the enemy line they did, indeed, force the enemy to give ground, but they were unable to pursue them far or spur their horses on strongly. The enemy cavalry, on the other hand, began to outflank our line on both sides and trample our men down from behind. When some of our cohorts detached themselves from the line and charged, the Numidians being fresh, would get away thanks to their speed; then, as our men were returning to their lines, the Numidians would encircle them and cut them off. As a result, it did not appear safe for our men to either stand their ground and keep in their ranks or to charge forward and try their fortune.”

“The enemy's forces kept growing, as frequent reinforcements arrived from the king; our men's strength was sapped by exhaustion; and besides the wounded could neither leave the line nor be conveyed to a place of safety, since the whole army was surrounded and penned in by the enemy cavalry. They abandoned hope of survival, and as men are wont to do in their last hours, either lapsed into self-pity or asked for their relatives to be looked after, if fortune should rescue anyone from this peril. Fear and grief filled the whole army.”

Curio, seeing their terror and realizing that neither his exhortations nor his pleas were being heeded, decided that in their wretched situation there was only one hope of safety left. He ordered them to occupy, in a body, the near-by hill and to convey the standards there. Saburra sent his cavalry there too and forestalled them. Then indeed our men fell into utter despair; some were killed by the cavalry as they attempted to flee, others threw themselves down, even though they were unhurt. Gnaeus Domitius, a cavalry officer, gathered a few horsemen round Curio and urged him to flee and save himself, and to make for camp, promising that he himself would stay with him. Curio, however, declared that he could never go and face Caesar again after losing the army Caesar had entrusted

to him; and so fought on and was killed. A few of the cavalry got away from the battle; but those who had halted at the tail of the column, as mentioned above, to rest their horses, seeing at a distance the rout of the entire army, retired safely to the camp. Every one of the infantry was killed.” (From Caesar’s ‘Civil War’ Book 5: “Curio’s Last Stand”)

### **Extended Map Setup:**

The Curio’s Last Stand scenario uses an extended two section map to better allow the maneuvers and movements of this “skirmish style” battle between the mainly light and heavily cavalry Numidan force and the almost totally medium to heavy legionary force under Curio’s control. 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:**

X7 Hills G4, G5, G6, G7, F4, F5, F6

Special Hill Rule: If a unit fires Missiles (**not pilum**) uphill from a clear hex into a Hill hex only one dice is thrown and the unit may not move before firing. Units that moved before firing may not fire missiles uphill from a clear hex into a Hill hex.

### **Initial Army Setup:**

Caesarian Army: All units setup on Map 1 (Use Roman Blocks)

X2 Heavy Infantry (See Special Legionary Rules): B5, A6

X2 Elite Heavy Infantry (Each five blocks: See Special Legionary Rules) B6, A7

X2 Medium Infantry (See Special Legionary Rules): B7, A8

X2 Medium Cavalry (2 Blocks each see Special rules): A5, A9

X1 Leader: A7 (Curio)

Numidian Army: All units setup on Map 2 or off-map initially (Use Carthaginian Blocks)

X11 Light Cavalry: D2, C4, C5, C6, C3, C7, C8, C9, C10, D11, C11

X1 Leader: A7 (Saburra)

Off-map initial Numidian units: x1 Light Cavalry x3 Medium Cavalry, x5 Light Infantry, x3 Auxillia, x1 Light Archers, x2 Elephant, x1 Leader (King Juba.) See Special Rules on entry of these initial off-map units to the map.

### **War Council:**

Caesarian Roman Army:

Leader: Curio

5 Cards\*

Numidian Royal Army:

Leader: King Juba

6 Cards\*

Move First \* The initial hands may not include the command card “Darken the Sky”

**Victory:**

Numidian Player 6 Banners, scores ½ Banner per Caesarian cavalry unit eliminated and one Banner per other Caesarian unit or leader eliminated.

Caesarian Player 9 Banners—scores 2 Banners if King Juba is eliminated—scores one Banner for every Caesarian Legionary unit and Leader that is able to exit the map (see special rules)---other Banner scores as normal.

The battle may also end once all Caesarian units and leader have exited the map or been eliminated—if no one has won by that point the battle is considered to be a draw.

**Scenario Special Rules:**

Command Rules:

All 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.

*Units and the Rally Card:* No unit can be rallied to beyond six 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.

*Leader Movement Capabilities:* Numidian Leaders ordered to move by themselves may move up to four Hexes.

**Caesarian Special Rules:**

The Caesarian Redraw:

Up to once per game the Caesarian Player may in lieu of taking a player-turn discard three cards into the discard pile and pick three new cards from the available draw pile. This option may not be carried out if Curio is no longer on the map.

Caesarian Cavalry Special Rally Back:

Once per game the Caesarian Player may decide to bring back at his option one eliminated two block Medium Cavalry unit back into play. At the start of any friendly Player-turn in which an “Order Medium Troops card is played by the Caesarian return one eliminated Caesarian Medium Cavalry to play in any vacant clear hex not adjacent to the enemy within three hexes of the Curio Leader unit, no return to play is possible if Caesar is not on the map. The Numidian Player still retains the ½ Banner scored from when the cavalry was eliminated originally (and could even score again if the unit is eliminated a second time).

### Caesarian Voluntary Map Exit:

Caesarian units and the Curio Leader unit may voluntarily leave the map (return to their camp near the town of Utica) by exiting from hexes I6 to I12 inclusive on the map edge of Map 1. Units/Leader that start their own player-turn occupying the map edge exit hexes & that are ordered by the Caesarian Player may voluntarily exit the map at the player's option.

Certain Caesarian units and the Curio Leader unit score banners if they voluntarily exit, but a forced Leader evasion off the map by Curio never scores a banner and units may not satisfy Flag results by retreating off-map—follow the normal rules in such cases.

### Caesarian Legionary Special Rules & Units:

#### Roman Pilum:

Each Caesarian Heavy & Medium Infantry unit starts with a Pilum Marker. The Pilum is a one-time use weapon that is generally fired right before a Caesarian 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 Caesarian 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 Caesarian 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 the color, swords, 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 and may affect the number of dice available in the upcoming close combat.

Caesarian 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 Caesarian 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.

#### Caesarian Relief Moves & Cohort Maneuvers:

Adjacent Caesarian Heavy and Medium Infantry, 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 Caesarian Player may order a pair of adjacent Heavy/ Medium Infantry 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.

#### Caesarian Pre-Battle Exhaustion:

The normal battle-back for Caesarian Legionary units is one less than normal.i.e. three dice instead of four for medium infantry and four dice instead of five for heavy infantry. Caesarian Legionary units ordered via the “Double Time” command card may only move one hex.

**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.

### **Retreat & Evasion Scenario Special Rules:**

In this scenario units & leaders may retreat or evade in any direction ---there are no set map-edges in the scenario for the players to retreat or evade towards. Please follow the special rules outlined below for retreat and evasion by both players.

Cavalry Retreat: ALL Cavalry in the game need only retreat, and are allowed to retreat only two hexes **per** uncanceled Flag—not the normal distances listed in the rules.

Retreats in Curio’s Last Stand: Units retreating due to Flag results **must end** their full retreats in a hex not adjacent to enemy units. Failure to make a full retreat draws the usual penalties outlined in the rules. A retreating unit must end its retreat the full number of hexes taken in the retreat from its pre-retreat hex location.

Roman Legionary Retreat: A Roman Legionary unit which suffers one or more Flag hits may retreat up to 2 hexes (in lieu of the normal one hex) to satisfy the first Flag hit being taken—this is only done at the option of the Roman player and in accordance with the other retreat rules outlined in this section.

Evasion in Curio’s Last Stand: Units **must end** their evasion move in a hex not adjacent to enemy units at least two hexes away, if such a hex is not available one hex away is OK. Units that can only end their evasion adjacent to an enemy unit **MAY NOT** evade. Leaders alone may end their evasion adjacent to an enemy unit, but must evade the full number of hexes chosen away from their initial hex position. Otherwise use normal rules on evasion.

### **Numidian Army Special Rules:**

Auxillia Retreat: Numidian Auxillia forced or choosing to retreat must retreat 2 hexes per Flag result inflicted.

Off-map Numidian Unit Entry: Starting on the second Numidian Player-turn the Numidian may bring in one off-map unit or leader per friendly Player-turn—Place the new unit on any map-edge hex on Map 2 from A1 to A13 at the start of each Numidian Player turn after the first. No Numidian unit from off-map may be placed initially

adjacent to an enemy unit. Numidian initially off-map infantry units may not enter until all four off-map Numidian cavalry units have already entered play. The initially off-map Numidian Leader unit (King Juba) and the two elephant units may not enter the map until all initially off-map Numidian infantry units have entered the map. Off-map units may be ordered by a command card in the same Player-turn in which they enter.

**Order of Battle Notes:**

*Curio had only 15 cohorts of infantry (equal to a legion and a half) with him along with the 200 or so cavalry mentioned in the text—in all maybe 6,000 or so men. The other 5 cohorts of the Caesarian Army had been left back to guard the camp and baggage. Juba and his commander Saburra for their part had the bulk of the royal army of Numidia, perhaps 20,000 or more men, in the immediate vicinity of the battlefield or on route. Juba's army included a special guard of 2,000 Gallic/German mercenary cavalry, large infantry and other cavalry forces, as well as 60 elephants marching at the rear of the army with the king.*