

The Battle of the Sucro 75 BC: Pompey vs. Sertorius

Historical Background:

“The battle near the Sucro was fought, it is said, through the impatience of Pompey, lest Metellus should share with him in victory, Sertorius being also willing to engage Pompey before the arrival of Metellus. Sertorius delayed the time till the evening, considering the darkness of the night would be a disadvantage to his enemies, whether flying or pursuing, being strangers, and having no knowledge of the country.”

“When the fight began, it happened that Sertorius was not placed directly against Pompey, but against Afranius, who had command of the left wing of the Roman army, as he commanded the right wing of his own; but when he understood that his left wing began to give way, and yield to the assault of Pompey, he committed the care of his right wing to other commanders, and made haste to relieve those in distress; and rallying some that were flying, and encouraging others that still kept their ranks, he renewed the fight, and attacked the enemy in their pursuit so effectively as to cause a considerable rout, and brought Pompey into great danger of his life. For after being wounded and losing his horse he escaped unexpectedly. For the Africans with Sertorius who took Pompey’s horse, set out with gold, and covered with rich trappings, fell out with one another; and upon the dividing of the spoil, gave over the pursuit. Afranius, in the meantime, as soon as Sertorius had left his right wing...overthrew all that opposed him; and pursuing them to their camp, fell in together with them, and plundered them till it was dark night; knowing nothing of Pompey’s overthrow, nor being able to restrain his soldiers from pillaging; when Sertorius returning with victory, fell upon him and upon his men, who were all in disorder and slew many of them. And the next morning he came into the field again well armed and offered battle, but perceiving Metellus was near, he drew off, and returned to his camp saying: ‘If this old woman had not come up, I would have whipped that boy soundly, and sent him to Rome’...” (From Plutarch’s Life of Sertorius)

Terrain:

X12 Hill Tiles: A6, A7, C12, E12, G13, H11, I12, I8, E3, E1, D1, G1

X5 Woods Tiles: A2, A3, B11, F12, I5

X1 Broken Ground Tiles: H12

X3 Sertorian Camp Tiles: (See Special Rules, considered to be unfortified): A10, B9, B10

X5 Sucro River (unfordable): A12, B12, C13, D12, E13

Roman Army Setup (Use Roman Blocks)

X4 Heavy Infantry (see special Legionary rules) G7, G8, G4, G5

X6 Medium Infantry (see special Legionary rules) H3, H4, H7, H9, G9, G10

X3 Medium Cavalry: G11, G2, G3

X1 Light Slinger: H1

X1 Light Archer: F8

X1 Auxillia G6

X2 Leaders G9 (Afranius) G3 (Pompey)

Sertorian Army Setup (Use Carthaginian Blocks)

X2 Heavy Infantry (Elite troops with 5 blocks each see Legionary special rules) C7, C10

X2 Medium Infantry (see Legionary special rules) B6, B9

X2 Medium Cavalry C3, C12

X6 Auxillia: C4, C5, B4, C8, B8, C11 (Roman-trained see special rules)

X2 Light Infantry: D5, C9

X2 Warrior: B3, C6

X1 Light Cavalry: C2

X2 Leaders C10 (Sertorius) B6 (Perpenna)

War Council:

Roman Army

Leader: Pompey

5 Cards

Sertorian Army

Leader: Sertorius

6 Cards

Move First

Victory:

Victory is 9 Banners for both sides. The Roman Army receives 2 Banners **if all** three hex tiles of the Sertorian Camp are removed from the map (see Special Rules). The Sertorian Army receives 1 Banner if Pompey evades off the map or 2 Banners if Pompey is eliminated. The Roman Army receives 2 Banners if Sertorius is eliminated.

Special Rules:

Leader Command, Sertorius, Pompey & Rally Special Rules:

Sertorius can cancel **both** a retreat **and** a sword hit if present with the unit receiving such hits. All other 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 Sertorius or Pompey is the supporting leader---then up to two helmet hits may be counted.

Sertorius when moving & ordered by himself without an attached unit normally may move up to six hexes through any passable hexes instead of the regular three hexes for Leaders in the rulebook.

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.

Roman Legionary Infantry Rules:

The following types of infantry units in the game on BOTH sides are assumed to be Roman Legionaries: Heavy Infantry, and Medium Infantry, ALL of these units are considered to be Roman Legionary Infantry. The combatants in this era of Roman civil

war often recruited non-citizens from different areas of the Roman Republican Empire into their Legions and as a result the quality of such forces sometimes varied widely.

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 (or lost see below) –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. If two Roman Legionary Infantry units that have not thrown pilum yet engage the attacker resolves his pilum throw first. 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, 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 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. Sertorian Auxillia units may also conduct Roman Relief/Maneuver with each other or Sertorian Legionary infantry units.

Sertorian Roman-Trained Auxillia Units

The Sertorian Auxillia units represent the bulk of Sertorius’ infantry from the tribes of Iberia. These units used a more open Iberian skirmish style combat order in battle, but also were trained by Sertorius and his rebel citizen forces in Roman tactics, discipline, and weapons

- a) Sertorian Auxillia units may evade if attacked by Roman Legionary units.
- b) Sertorian Auxillia units may conduct Roman Relief/Maneuver with each other or Sertorian Legionary infantry units.

Sertorian Elite Legion:

Note that the two initial Sertorian Heavy Infantry units start the game with five blocks rather than the normal four blocks. These are Sertorius’ crack troops, made up of 4,000 or

so Roman citizens, the veterans of many a bloody fight both in Iberia and Africa while under his command. Treat these units as normal Heavy Infantry for all other purposes, but have the advantage of an extra initial block and may rally back to a full five block strength through use of a rally card

Sertorian Camp: The three Sertorian Camp hex tiles are considered to be un-fortified, these only block line of sight, units entering the camp must cease movement.—if these hexes are entered by Roman units the first Roman unit to enter the hex loses one block (as men split off to loot) immediately, and the camp tile is removed from the map—thereby converting the hex to clear.

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.

Optional Rules:

Sertorian Veteran Mercenaries: The sole Sertorian Light Cavalry unit is made up of Veteran horsemen from Maurentania in Africa located on the other side of the Pillars of Hercules from Iberia. When battling back only they hit on swords—they also only need retreat two hexes per retreat result implemented.

Roman Elite Slingers:

The sole Roman Slinger unit hits on swords when executing missile fire against Sertorian light foot units & also hits on swords when battling-back in close combat against any Sertorian unit.

Veteran Initiative when ordered by a Line Card

All Sertorian Legionary Infantry units located anywhere and all Roman Heavy Infantry units that start their move stacked with or adjacent to a Roman Leader **and that are ordered** by a Line Command card may move up to two hexes and close combat at their option.

Free Setup & Random First Move:

This optional rule allows the players’ to specify their initial setup without knowing the content of the enemy’s initial setup. Both Players’ draw their initial hands first before setup and may look at the cards. The Roman Player then writes down the initial setup hexes for all his units and leaders, Cavalry units may not be initially deployed in a hex

wholly in the center section and a player may not have two leaders initially **located in the same** section (a leader in a dual section hex counts for these purposes as being **in both** sections), **or** within 2 hexes of each other. The Roman Player can specify the placement up to 2 units (0-2 units) and **no** Leaders in the F2-F11 hexrow (all inclusive). He then has to specify the placement of 8 to 11 units and 1-2 Leaders in hexrow G1-G13 and 4 to 7 units and 0-1 Leader in hexrow H1-H12. Once the Roman setup is written down the Sertorian Player proceeds to place his units & Leaders on the board within the following restrictions:

Hexrow D2-D11 (all inclusive)—0-3 units

Hexrow C1-C12 8-12 units 1-2 Leaders

Hexrow B1-B11 4-8 units 0-1 Leader

The Sertorian Player also has to comply with the section restrictions for Cavalry and Leaders outlined above.

Once the Sertorian has finished his on map setup the Roman Player places his units on the map per his pre-written down setup, showing the Sertorian the paperwork. The two players each roll one six –sided dice to determine who moves first--high roll moves first—if the roll is tied the Sertorian moves first; and once the first player is decided, then they proceed to take & resolve the first move of the game.