

Montaperti 1260

DBA 2.2 scenario

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The battle of Montaperti, one of the largest battles of the time, was fought on Sept. 4th, 1260 near Siena, Tuscany, where a Siena-led Ghibelline coalition clashed with a Guelf alliance under the leadership of Florence. In the early morning the Ghibelline army (according to most sources 1,600 knights and 17,000 foot, facing 3,000 knights and 28,000 foot on the Guelf side) crossed the river Arbia taking by surprise the Guelfs, who did not expect a battle on that day. The fight began with the Ghibelline cavalry, about half of whom were German knights sent by King Manfred, attacked the Guelf cavalry deployed as the right wing of their army. Soon after the Ghibelline foot attacked the Guelf foot on the hills. Because of their inferior numbers the Ghibellines were soon in difficulty, but they had a trump card: a small formation led by the Count of Arras (200 knights and 200 foot, possibly crossbowmen or archers) had been tasked with outflanking the Guelf left wing and in the afternoon they attacked the Guelf army in the rear. At about the same time some Florentine knights in the Guelf army, forced to take the field against their will being themselves Ghibellines, changed side and cut down the Guelf cavalry standard. The Count of Arras himself killed the Guelf leader Iacopino Rangoni da Modena, causing the Guelf army morale to collapse. The Ghibellines inflicted very heavy losses on the fleeing Guelfs (the “great carnage which turned the Arbia red” was mentioned by Dante Alighieri, Divine Comedy Hell X, 84-85), the massacre ending only after nightfall. 10,000 casualties and 15,000 prisoners were estimated for the Guelfs, while only 600 dead and 400 wounded for the Ghibellines.

Basics

1. Game length: at most 10 pairs of bounds (start at 10:00am). One bound = 30 minutes.
2. DBA 2.2 rules, terrain and troop scales (exception: the foot elements representation is about doubled).
3. The combat elements belong to a pair of complete army lists (III-72b), but are assigned so as to better represent the relative size and quality of the actual participants in the battle. Some additional optional elements are also fielded on the Guelf side so that they have a 15-element-army, defeated at 5 elements lost.

Ghibellines

1. First bound player.
2. Army list with:
 - 1 Kn(g) + 1 Kn + 1 Cb (Van);
 - 1 Kn (Arras' Force);
 - 6 Sp + 1 Cb (Main);
 - 1 Ww (Carroccio).
3. The Carroccio is to be deployed on the road leading West, rear corner touching the board edge.
4. The Ghibelline Kn elements always add +1 to their combat dicing if fighting enemy mounted.
5. “**Treason**”: starting with the 5th Ghibelline bound, provided that the Guelf losses are higher than the Ghibelline's, the Ghibelline player may expend his last available PIP for that bound in order to make the Ghibellines in the Guelf army change side. Roll 1D6, on 3-6 the attempt is successful and, as a consequence, the Guelf player is not allowed any PIP dicing in the ensuing Guelf bound; on a result of 1-2 the treason attempt fails, but it can be tried again (once per Ghibelline bound) until successful.
6. **Arras Force**: this Kn is deployed off-board as an ambush force. The Ghibelline player can spend PIPs to activate Arras' Force after the “treason” has happened, or starting from his 7th bound. In its first bound this Kn can perform, from the southern edge of the board and ignoring terrain penalties, up to 3 movements of no more than 500 paces if enough PIPs are granted. It may however end its movement in contact with Guelf elements (except Ww) and fight in the same bound.

Guelfs

1. Army list with:
 - 3 Kn (Van);
 - 2 Sp + 2 x8Cb + 3 Hd (Main);
 - 1 Kn(g) + 2 Ax (Reserve);
 - 1 Ww + 1 Hd (Carroccio).
2. The Kn(g) and 2 Ax (army Cdr with reserve) are to be deployed as a group at the back of the Van-Main alignment, mid-way to the Carroccio. They may move only after at least 1 Guelf Kn is lost.
3. The Carroccio starts on the northern road leading East, rear edge touching the board edge, his Hd in front. They may move only after at least 3 Guelf elements have been lost.
4. Any Guelf element fighting or shooting at **Arras' Force** always suffer a -1 to his combat/shooting dicing. As long as **Arras' Force** ends a bound surviving a shooting/close combat, in the following bound all the Guelf elements suffer a -1 to any combat/shooting dicing, and -1 PIP if a Guelf bound.

Both sides

1. Initial deployment: as much historically as possible, 250-300 paces apart (i.e. within Kn reach).
2. River ARBIA is impassable.
3. Spears are not allowed a supporting rank.
4. Palvesari (8Cb) add +1 in close combat vs. enemy foot.
5. No camps are used; a lost Carroccio counts as a lost camp.
6. For defeat purposes, at least 2 out of the required lost elements have to be Kn.

Optional rules

One of the following rules should be applied in order to artificially decrease the lethality of combat in the initial bounds, so that the historical duration of the battle is more closely re-created.

1. "Disengage" rule: in case of tie, both sides recoil 1 base depth.
2. Until the end of the 3rd pair of bounds, any "recoiled" result is intended as "no effect" and any "destroyed" result is to be applied as a "recoiled" result instead.
3. Until the end of the 3rd pair of bounds, any "destroyed" result is to be applied as a "flee" result instead.
4. Lost elements can be "rallied" in any edge contact with their own Carroccio, in their next bound, at the cost of 1 PIP until the 3rd pairs of bounds, 2 PIPs in the 4th and 5th, then 3 PIPs in the 6th. A rallied element can be used normally in the same bound and is no longer lost for defeat purposes.

Closing notes

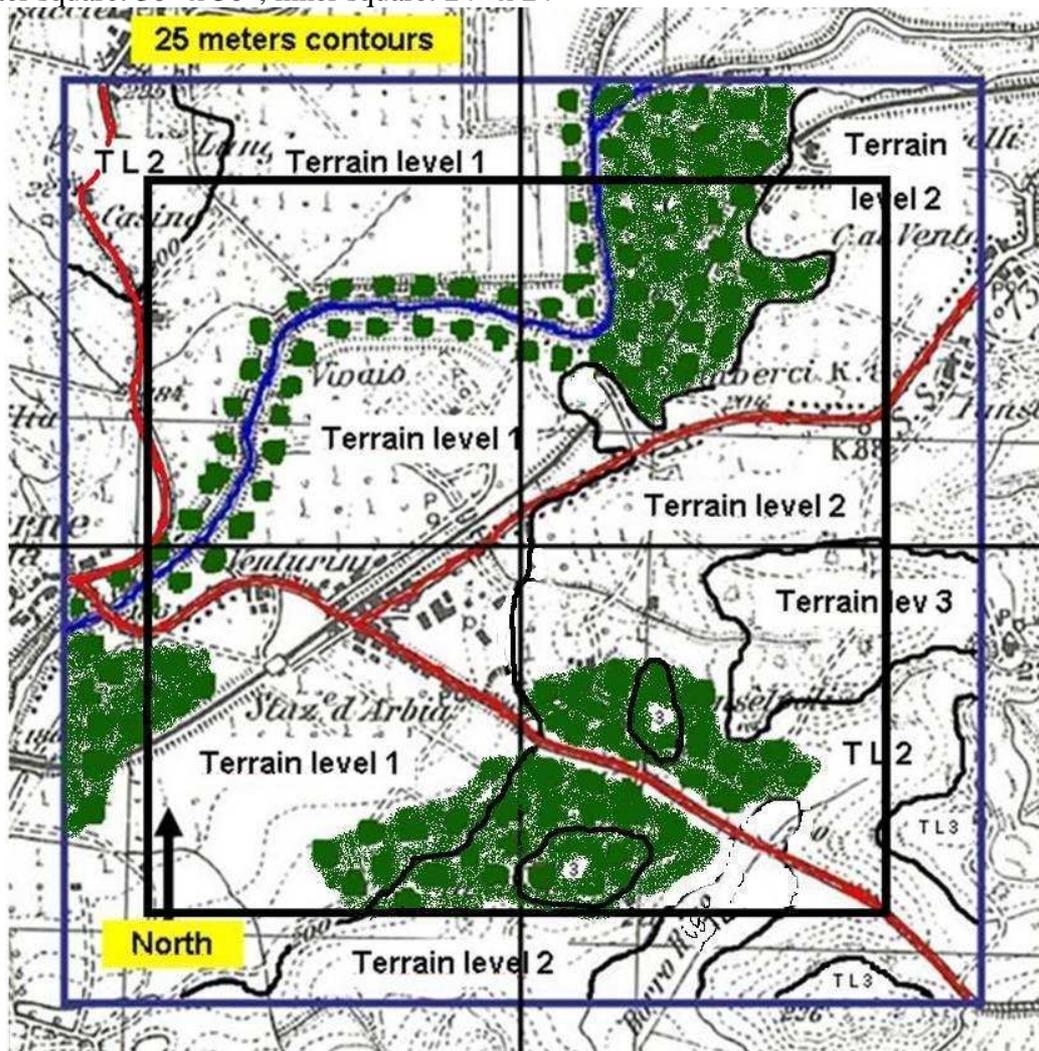
This scenario was developed over several months, actually starting in August 2013, after the Society of Ancients invited me and other Italian members to contribute to their draft "Montaperti Battle Pack". This battle had been chosen as the theme of SoA "Battle Day 2014", scheduled for March 29th, when it will be recreated on the table top with a number of different wargame rules. Designing this scenario has proven quite hard, due to the often contradictory historical sources and to the many peculiar events which affected the battle development and outcome. My original plan called for a Giant/Historical DBA 2.2 battle, but eventually I had to realize that not enough miniature would be available to me in time for the Battle Day, so I eventually opted for standard DBA scenario (although with 3 additional elements on the Guelf side). A large number of different version were drafted by the time: this is, for instance, version 8.2! I have nevertheless designed tentative scenarios for Giant/Historical DBA 2.2, Giant DBA 3 and BBDBA 3, which can be found posted in the Fanaticus and SoA forums. Should anybody be interested in, or willing to provide a feedback, please drop me a line.

Happy gaming!

Bruno

Game area

Outer square: 30" x 30"; inner square: 24" x 24"



DBA set-up

