

Commands and Colors Ancients

Mercenary: Land Battles of the First Punic War Revisited

by Richard Borg and Dan Fournie

In C3i Magazine Nr16 Dan Fournie presented a **SPQR** scenario article covering two land battles of the First Punic War — **Agrigentum, 262 BC** and **Adys, 256 BC**. With the advent of **Commands and Colors: Ancients (CCA)** we have repackaged those battles for play in an entirely different game system.

CCA is more abstract, simpler, faster to play and most importantly, extremely fun. And with the terrain tiles, it is possible to recreate any ancient battlefield. This has allowed us to develop a new battle, one that was never available even as an **SPQR** scenario due to the lack of a map. The **Battle of Panormus, 250 BC** is a most unusual and interesting fight. We offer these *three new scenarios* for **CCA** in the hope that you will find as much enjoyment playing them as we did designing them.

The one-page format for **CCA** battles is ideal for ease of reference and quick play. However, it leaves little space for historical detail. Within **C3i Magazine**, there is the space to include historical background information, including unit scale and order of battle information. The detailed historical background for these First Punic War battles can be found in the **C3i** Nr16, but here are some **CCA** specific comments:

Agrigentum, 262 BC

Scale: Each unit represents about 2,500 infantry, 1,500 cavalry or 20 elephants. Each block represents about 625 infantry, 500 cavalry or 10 elephants.

Carthaginian OOB: The Carthaginian army was composed of about 1/2 African levies and 1/2 assorted mercenaries, totaling around 30,000 foot, 4,500 horse and 60 elephants.

- Heavy infantry (H) represent allied and mercenary Greek hoplites
- Warriors (W) represent Gaulish and Ligurian infantry
- Auxiliary infantry (A) represent Iberian *caetrati* (front line) and Libyan levies (reserve line)
- Light infantry (L) represent Numidian javelineers
- Bowmen (B) represent Cretan archers
- Slingers (S) represent Balearic slingers
- Medium cavalry (MC) represents Gaulish and Greek cavalry
- Light cavalry (LC) represent Numidian cavalry

Roman OOB: The Roman army was composed of four double-legions, minus detachments manning the siege lines, totaling about 35,000 foot and 3,000 horse.

- Heavy infantry (H) represent Roman and

Italian *triarii*

- Medium infantry (M) represent Roman and Italian *hastati* and *principes*
- Light infantry (L) represent Roman and Italian *velites*
- Medium cavalry (MC) represent Roman and Italian cavalry

Recorded Losses

- **Carthage:** 3,000 killed in action, 4,000 captured, eight elephants killed and 33 disabled
- **Rome:** Heavy losses in the battle and siege operations.

Adys, 256 BC

Scale: Each unit represents about 1,000 infantry, 500 cavalry or 20 elephants

Each block represents about 250 infantry, 170 cavalry or 10 elephants

Carthaginian OOB: The Carthaginian army was composed of two-thirds African levies under Hasdrubal and Bostar and one-third veteran mercenaries under Hamilcar, totaling about 15,000 foot, 1,000 horse and 20 elephants

- Heavy infantry (H) represent mercenary Greek hoplites
- Warriors (W) represent Gauls and Iberian *scutarii* infantry
- Auxiliary infantry (A) represent Iberian *caetrati* and Carthaginian militia
- Light infantry (L) represent Libyan javelineers
- Slingers (S) represent Balearic slingers
- Bowmen (B) represent Moorish archers
- Medium cavalry (MC) represent civic Carthaginian and Greek mercenary cavalry

Roman OOB: The Roman army was composed of two double-legions with some marines, totaling about 15,000 foot and 500 horse.

- Heavy infantry (H) represent Roman and Italian *triarii*

- Medium infantry (M) represent Roman and Italian *hastati* and *principes*
- Light infantry (L) represent Roman and Italian *velites*
- Auxiliary infantry (A) represent Roman marines and rowers
- Medium cavalry (MC) represent Roman and Italian cavalry

Recorded Losses

- **Carthage:** Exaggerated losses of 17,000 men killed and 5,000 men and 18 elephants captured were claimed by Orosius; Most of the mercenaries and some of the levy infantry were killed in action; the cavalry and elephants escaped unharmed
- **Rome:** The First Legion took heavy losses fighting the mercenaries

Panormus, 250 BC

Scale: Each unit represents about 2,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry or 46 elephants. Each block represents about 500 infantry, 333 cavalry or 23 elephants

Carthaginian OOB: The Carthaginian army was composed of half African levies and half mercenaries, totaling about 22,000 foot, 3,000 horse and 140 elephants

- Heavy infantry (H) represent mercenary Greek hoplites
- Medium infantry (M) represent Libyan spearmen
- Warriors (W) represent Gaulish infantry
- Auxiliary infantry (A) represent Iberian *caetrati*
- Light infantry (L) represent Numidian javelineers
- Slingers (S) represent Balearic slingers
- Bowmen (B) represent Cretan archers
- Medium cavalry (MC) represent mercenary Greek cavalry

Roman OOB: The Roman army was composed of two double-legions reinforced with civic militia, totaling about 26,000 foot and 2,000 horse.

- Heavy infantry (H) represent Roman and Italian *triarii*
- Medium infantry (M) represent Roman and Italian *hastati* and *principes*
- Light infantry (L) represent Roman and Italian *velites* and civic militia
- Auxiliary infantry (A) represent Italian recruit cohorts
- Medium cavalry (MC) represent Roman and Italian cavalry

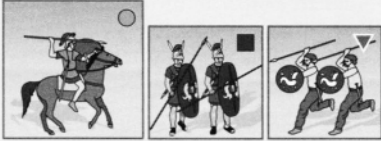
Recorded Losses

- **Carthage:** 20,000 men killed in action; 60 elephants captured
- **Rome:** None recorded.



Commands and Colors ANCIENTS

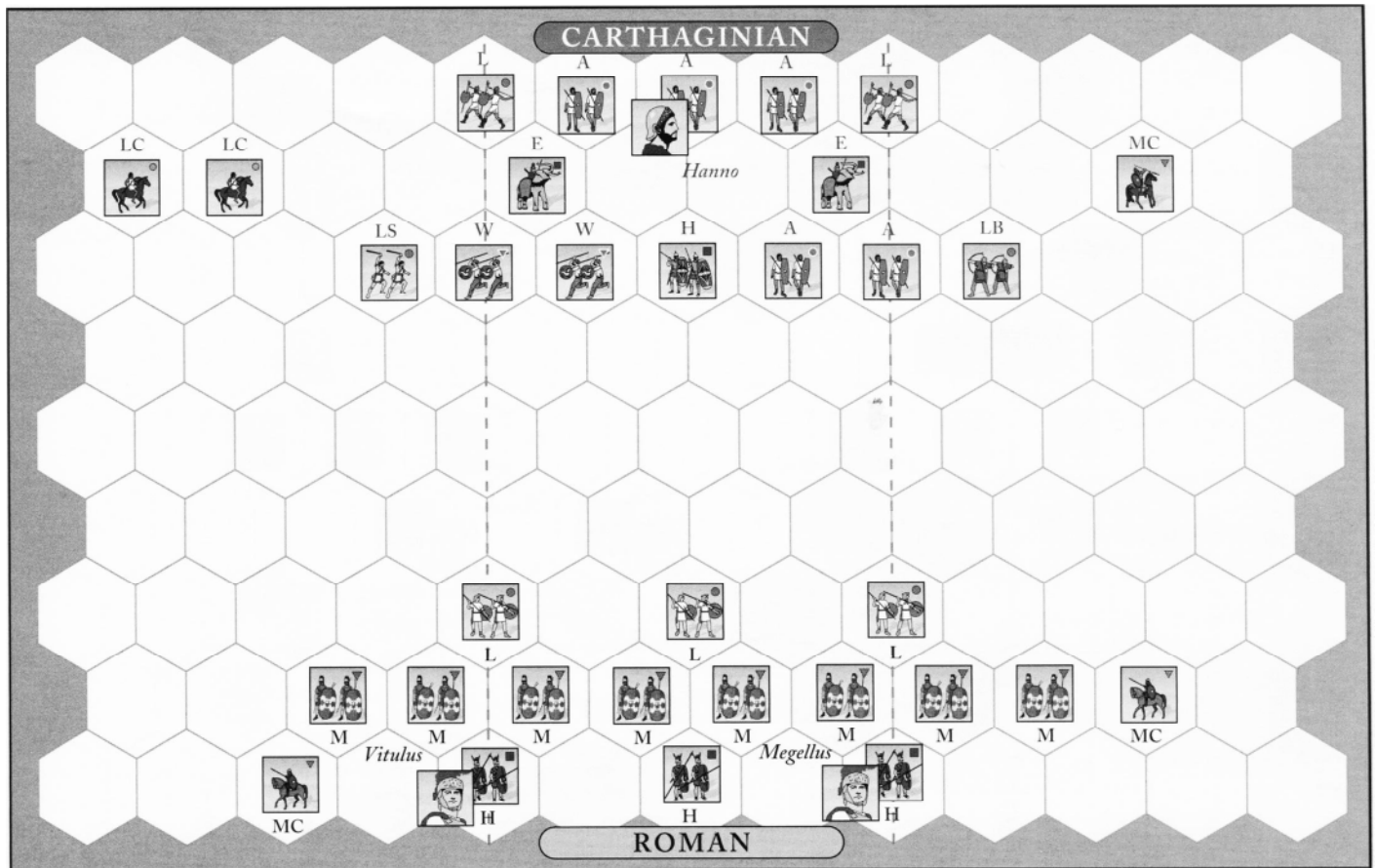
Published: 2005 by GMT Games LLC
Game Design: Richard Borg
Art Director: Rodger B. MacGowan
Maps Tiles: Mark Simonitch
Unit Labels: Lemick, Simonitch & MacGowan



Contents: 60 Command cards; 345 Blocks; five Sheets of Unit Labels; Rule & Scenario book; 7 dice; 2 Reference Cards; Bookcase Box
Playing Time: 1 hour per battle
Age Level: 12+ Years old and up
Players: 2

AGRIGENTUM 262 BC

Official Commands & Colors: Ancients Scenario - Approved by Richard Borg



Historical Background

The First Punic War began when Rome decided to invade Sicily in 264. Carthage, unprepared, scrambled to raise an army under Hannibal Gisco. By 262 Hannibal arrived with an advance force at Agrigentum, but the Roman consuls Lucius Postumius Megellus and Quintus Mamilius Vitulus made a preemptive strike and placed him under siege. Months later, Carthage dispatched a relief army of 30,000 foot, 4,500 horse and 60 elephants under Hanno the Elder. Megellus and Vitulus detached about a quarter of their army to guard Hannibal, and brought the remaining 35,000 foot and 3,000 horse onto the field. Hanno organized his army with his mercenaries in the van, his elephants in a second line and his African levies in a third. As the armies clashed the mercenaries fought fiercely at first, but eventually buckled. As they routed into the line of elephants, all hell broke loose. The elephants were caught up in the pandemonium, and began to rampage in all directions. The third Carthaginian line was thrown into confusion, but rallied to resist the advancing legions. After more hard fighting, the Punic army broke. The largest battle of the First Punic War had ended in a decisive Roman victory, but ironically Hannibal's army was able to escape. Roman losses in the battle and the siege were so heavy that Megellus and Vitulus were denied a triumph, despite their victory.

War Council

Carthaginian Army

- Leader: Hanno the Elder
- 5 Command Cards
- Move First

Roman Army

- Leader: Megellus and Vitulus
- 5 Command Cards

Victory

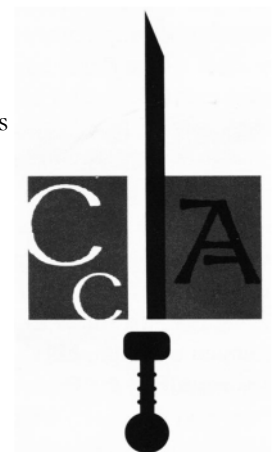
7 Banners

Special Rules

None.

The stage is set.

The battle lines are drawn, and you are in command.
You are in Command!





Historical Background

Following the Battle of Agrigentum, the Carthaginian leaders decided to avoid pitched battles and instead fall back on fortified posts, while harassing the Romans with their fleet and guerrilla raids. The focus of the war shifted to Rome's successful struggle to wrest naval supremacy from Carthage, 260-256 BC. With the seas clear of the Punic navy, the consul Gaius Atilius Regulus landed in Africa with a small army of 15,000 infantry and 500 cavalry in 256. In the emergency, Carthage called out her seldom used civic levies under two generals, Hasdrubal Hanno and Bostar. These generals assembled about 10,000 militia foot, along with about 1,500 cavalry and some elephants. The council also recalled Hamilcar from Sicily with 5,500 crack mercenaries. The Punic army advanced to meet the Romans at Adys. The Carthaginians, hesitant to face the legions on the plain, encamped in rough, hilly terrain. Boldly, Regulus launched a dawn assault on the Punic camp from two sides. The Punic cavalry and elephants were unable to engage effectively, but Hamilcar led his mercenaries in a vigorous counterattack. The mercenaries drove back one legion, but were then caught in the flank and cut down in a fierce struggle. The Romans then routed the Punic militia and overran their camp. Carthage sued for peace. Regulus offered terms that were impossibly harsh, prompting Carthage to renew the struggle. A Spartan mercenary captain, Xanthipus, was hired and Carthage fought on. The stage is set. The battle lines are drawn, and you are in command. You are in Command!

War Council

Carthaginian Army

- Leader: Hasdrubal Hanno
- 2* Command Cards

Roman Army

- Leader: Regulus
- 5 Command Cards
- Move First

Victory

5 Banners

Special

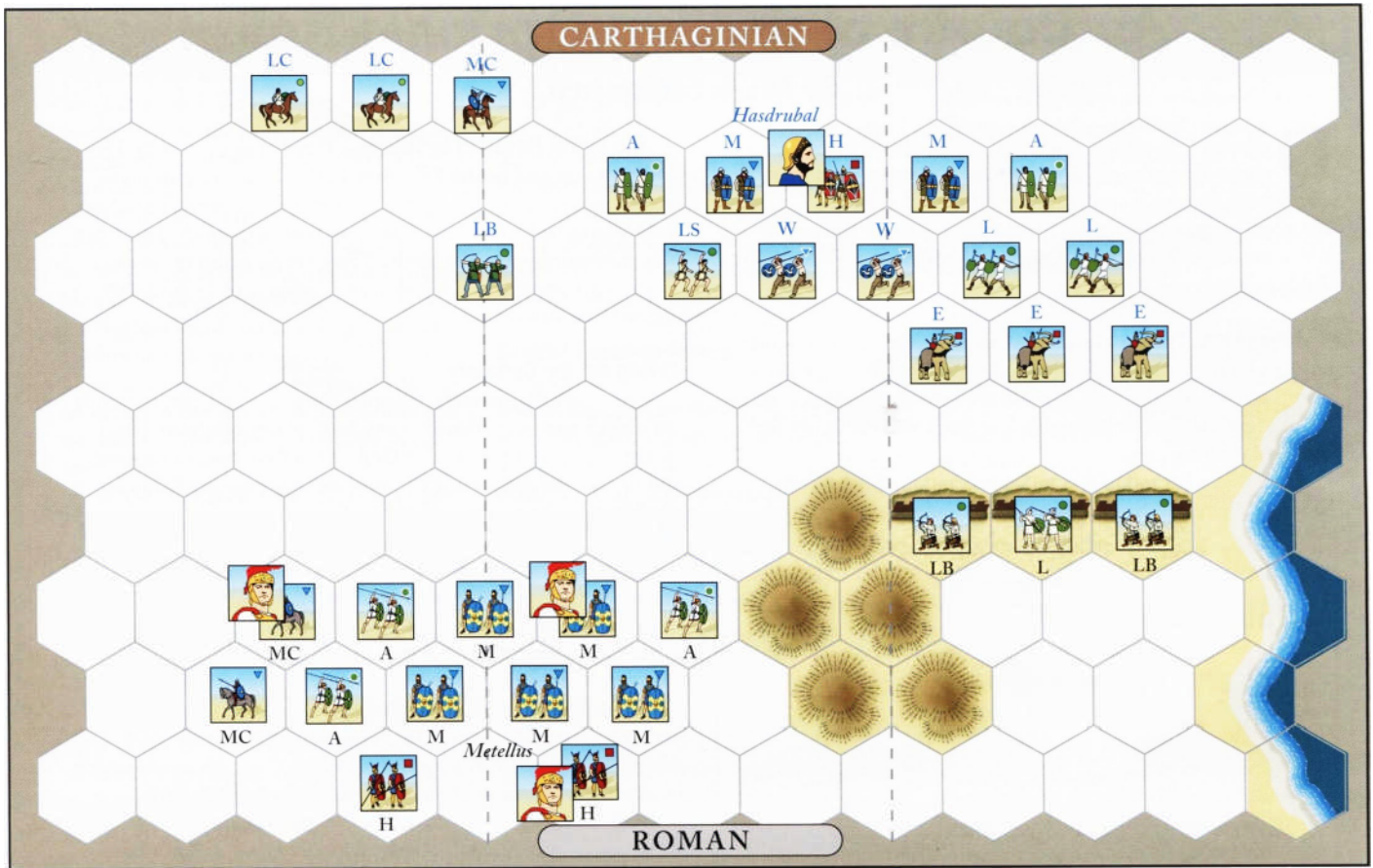
A Roman unit that captures (occupies) a camp hex counts as a victory banner for the Roman player. As long as the Roman unit remains on the camp hex, it continues to count toward the Roman victory. If the unit moves off or is eliminated, it no longer counts.

(*) The Carthaginian player starts with two Command cards. On turn 1 play one card, draw two cards. Carthaginian player now holds three Command cards. On turn 2 play one card, draw two cards. Carthaginian player now holds four Command cards. On turn 3 play one card, draw one card. Carthaginian player hand size stays at four Command cards for the rest of the battle.



PANORMUS 250 B C

Official Commands & Colors: Ancients Scenario - Approved by Richard Borg



Historical Background

Following the disaster at Bagradas only a few hundred of Regulus' men ever made it back to Rome. But they were enough to spread the horrible stories of being trampled by elephants, and cut down by cavalry. Despite his defeat at Adys, Hasdrubal Hanno was placed in the command of the main Carthaginian and from 254-252 was occupied suppressing a Libyan revolt. In 251, Hasdrubal took his veteran army to Sicily and massed 25,000 men and 140 elephants. The Romans now avoided pitched battle, for fear of the elephants and cavalry. In June of 250 Hasdrubal advanced against the consular army of Caecilius Metellus at Panormus. Metellus set a trap for the elephants. He built a trench before the city, stocked with a large supply of missiles. Metellus sent out his velites to goad Hasdrubal's elephants, and then withdraw in apparent panic to the trench. The Punic army pursued in disorder, sensing an easy victory. As the elephants approached the trench, Metellus launched a massive missile barrage against them. The war elephants recoiled in terror, and rampaged through Hasdrubal's army. Metellus' legionnaires sallied out from the city, and routed the shaken Punic army. Nearly all the elephants were captured and later slaughtered in the circus to entertain the crowds in Rome. The Battle of Panormus was the last major land battle of the war. Seven years later, the Romans won the naval battle of the Aegates and ended the 24-year war.

War Council

Carthaginian Army
 • Leader: Hasdrubal Hanno
 • 5 Command Cards

Roman Army
 • Leader: Metellus
 • 5 Command Cards
 • Move First

Victory
 6 Banners

Special Rules
 None.

The stage is set.
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