

The Battle of Dara 4530 AD

Scenario 27 for Conquerors and Kings ancient battle rules.

Setting the scene

The Byzantine (eastern Roman) empires and the Sassanid (Persian empire) were both very powerful and rubbed along each other in a constantly violent and argumentative manner. Of the two, the Sassanid empire was the more powerful on the border. Thus, the Byzantines paid a large annual tribute. The Byzantines had built a city called Dara near the border. This was not far from the Persian fortress city of Nisibis.

As per usual the the Sassanids decided to attack. Thier army was more powerful and much suited to open scenery plains warfare. Although not as good at siege warfare the Persians would be happy to lock up the Byzantines in their city of Dara.

The Sassanid commander Farouz (various spellings) was a very capable general. The Byzantines were led by a younger and even more talented general, Belisarius.

This scenario starts on the second very hot day of the battle, just after the Persian had another 10000 troops arrive, giving a total of 50,000 soldiers.

The Byzantine army was about half the size of the Sassanid one. It was inferior in other ways too. The assanid army had large amounts of high quality armoured cavalry.

The first and best idea of Belisarius was to dig defensive ditches in front of his troops outside the walls of Dara. The Persians believed that their larger and better army should overcome this and proceed to crush the Byzantines. This is where the scenario starts.

ADVICE

Do not read up on this battle. Enjoy playing it and then look up the details.

Deployment

- ◆ Where units have extra qualities such as armour, veteran etc the player can **choose** which particular units these are applied to.
- ◆ Generals do not roll for gifts, unless they are replacements.
- ◆ The scenario generator **is** not used.
- ◆ Lates and losses are not applied.
- ◆ No piggy chase
- ◆ Normal victory conditions apply.
- ◆ The given battle tactics can be applied by the player as he sees fit.
- ◆ Assume all units are trained and have shield unless specified otherwise.

Notes Listings such as "1x armoured, 1 x veteran" can be interpreted as 1 aspect for two units or both aspects for the same unit.

1. Byzantine units only suffer morale fails on 5,6 scores.
2. Sassanid units (not Byzantine) suffer a -2 for any fights across the ditches.
3. Sassanid units can never claim rear support.
4. Sassanid close order infantry cannot move in turn 1.
5. The first **destroyed** Byzantine cavalry unit can re-appear on the Sassanid right flank at the **START** of any Byzantine turn (these are Huns. Trained, shock, no armour). No D6 score needed for arrival. **Any** non Sassanid occupied right hand table zone can be used.
The walls of Dara are assumed to line the Byzantine table edge. The walls do not affect th e game, but might be placed for visual effect.

Byzantine army

General 1= Belisarius **Gifts** = Morale, Fight

General 2= Hermogenes **Gifts** = Valiant

3 x Foot skirmishers 4x mounted skirmishers

2 x Auxiliary with bow no shield (1 armoured, 1 raw)

4 Close order spear , armoured and shield (1 x Veteran , 1 x raw)

6 x cavalry **shield**. (1x Elite, 2 x veteran, 5 x armoured, 2 x shock)

Battle tactics= Choose from G,J,K options

Skirmisher units are placed wherever the player wishes in his first **two** rows..

Black line is the ditch that runs between zones.

walls of Dara Byzantine army (Defender) walls of Dara					
Rough hill					Rough hill
2 x cavalry	1 x cavalry elite <i>(bucellarii)</i>	2x close order 1 x auxiliary General 1	2x close order 1x auxiliary	1 x cavalry	General 2 2x cavalry
2x cavalry 1x auxiliary	2x cavalry <i>(immortals)</i> 1x auxiliary	3x close order General 1	3x close order	2 x cavalry 1 x auxiliary General 2	2 x cavalry 1 x auxiliary
Sassanid army (Attacker)					

Sassanid army

General 1= Firouz **Gifts** = Fight, valiant

General 2= Pityaxes **Gifts** = Valiant

4x Foot skirmishers 5 Mounted skirmishers

8x cavalry **shield** and spear (1 Elite, 3 veteran, 6 armoured , 2 bow, 4 shock)

6 x Close order spear and shield (4 x levy, 4 bow and no shield)

4 x Auxiliary (1 x bow/no shield, 2x shield and spear).

Battle tactics= Choose from D,E,F options

Skirmisher units are placed wherever the player wishes in his first **two** rows..

What really happened at the battle of Dara

This is written in Portuguese so that you are less tempted to read the result and try to emulate it.

Portuguese

Os sassânidas estavam cientes dos fossos, mas decidiram que sua superioridade numérica compensaria qualquer desvantagem sofrida.

Este é o segundo dia da batalha.

O exército bizantino era profissional, mas consciente de que as probabilidades estavam contra eles. Isso causou certa hesitação entre os defensores.

Os ataques iniciais dos sassânidas foram em ambos os flancos contra a cavalaria bizantina adversária. A cavalaria sassânida, superior em número, avançou e fez bons progressos.

O problema para esses sassânidas era que os bizantinos no centro da batalha (que não estavam fortemente engajados) os atingiam nos flancos com arqueiros e ataques.

Essa foi uma punição que a excelente cavalaria sassânida não conseguiu suportar. Isso começou a fraturar suas formações. No flanco esquerdo sassânida, Belisário colocou sua cavalaria de elite, os bucelários (1000 homens), o que causou uma ruptura da qual os sassânidas, sabiamente, recuaram.

No outro flanco, os sassânidas também foram atingidos pela cavalaria hunna a serviço dos bizantinos, que se escondera no flanco. A confusão/choque causou uma nova ruptura e a subsequente retirada sassânida.

Embora os bizantinos tenham perseguido, Belisário sabiamente os impediu de atacar o acampamento sassânida. Os sassânidas não foram derrotados, apenas vencidos.

Esta batalha não pôs fim à guerra, mas deu aos sassânidas um duro golpe.

Ambos os generais lutaram bem, mas Belisário organizou suas defesas de forma excepcional. Ele demonstrou ser um comandante muito inteligente.

Merecem destaque os combates pessoais do primeiro dia da batalha. Estes podem ser parcialmente verídicos, mas não deixam de ser interessantes.

Os sassânidas declararam um desafio pessoal a Belisário. Belisário enviou Andreas, um aprendiz de sua casa. Andreas matou o campeão sassânida. Um segundo campeão persa se apresentou e Andreas o matou também.

May 2026