



Close Files & European Order

XVII

Warfare in 17th century Europe

Game Scenario

The Dunes

June 1658



Historical Background

In June 1658 the last battle of the Franco-Spanish War, English Civil War and French Fronde rebellion was fought amongst the dunes near Dunkirk.

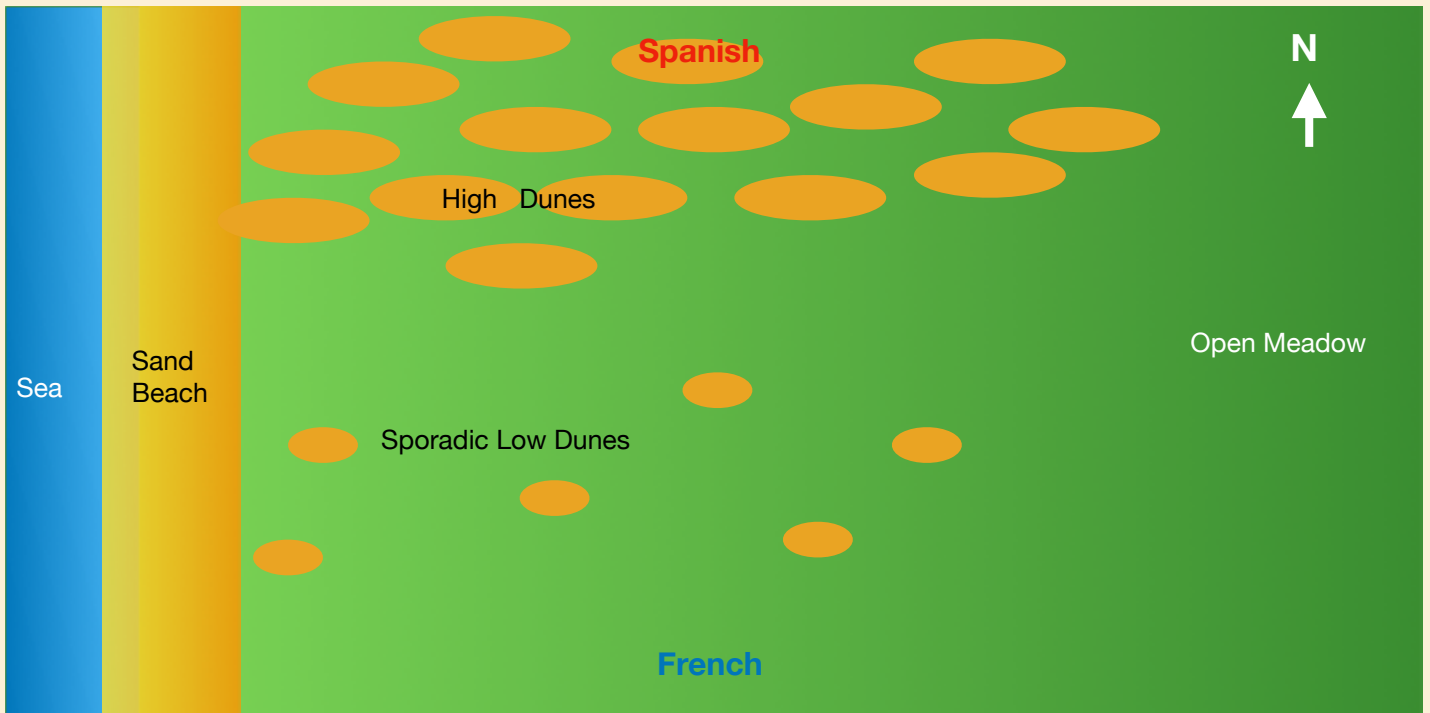
On one side, under Marshal Turenne, were French royalists aided by a sizeable English Commonwealth force, supported by the English fleet. On the other was the Spanish army of Flanders, British royalists in exile and the Prince of Condé's French frondeurs.

The battle came about when Don Juan of Austria (the Spanish governor general of Flanders) led 6000 foot and 8000 horse to relieve Turenne's siege of Dunkirk. Rather than waiting for them, Turenne marched north through the dunes to attack with 12,000 foot, 7000 horse and 10 light guns. Caught by surprise the Spanish/British/French army deployed along a line of high dunes without time to bring any artillery into the line nor to recall half of their horse which were away foraging.

Despite the difficult of manoeuvring through the sandy dunes the Franco-English won the day. The English foot under Sir William Lockhart charged up a very steep dune to engage the Spanish and Anglo-Scottish-Irish Royalists frontally as some of the French horse managed to get around their right (seaward) flank by advancing along the beach. Supporting fire from the English ships helped.



The Battlefield



The Battle of the Dunes took place on the coast just to the north of Dunkirk. To the west was the sea where the English fleet could bring fire to bear on the right flank of the Spanish. Then came a stretch of beach. To the immediate east of the beach were high sand dunes and then open meadows on the landward side.

For 28mm figures you ideally need a 12 x 6 foot table. A foot of blue cloth to the west represents the sea after which an approximately 18 inch wide strip of sand cloth to represent the beach. The battle began at low tide when the beach could be used but the incoming tide made its usefulness time sensitive. I recreate this by rolling in the sand cloth representing the beach by 1 inch every turn.

With 15mm or smaller miniatures you could do this on an 8 x 5 table, halving the sea and beach strips.

The sporadic dunes, beach and meadow offers good going but moving through the high dunes will disrupt movement and gives an advantage of ground to defending troops.

Deployment

The Spanish foot deploy on the seaward side of the high dunes. Then from right to left, the British royalists and Walloons. Condé's French hold the left. The Spanish cavalry is formed in a second line in support of the foot with a small reserve of guards.

The English form the seaward flank of the French army with French foot to their right. The French have a wing of horse on each flank — one on the beach and one on the open meadow. They also have a second line of horse in support of the foot as well as a reserve.

Scale

1 figure = approximately 50 men.

All numbers in the following orders of battle are bases of 2 cavalry or 4 infantry, not individual figures.



James, Duke of York (later King James II) commanded the British Royalists on the Spanish side at the Dunes.

Spanish Order of Battle

General and commander of the right wing and centre – Don Juan de Austria, one action

Right – Don Estevan Gamarra, Prince de Ligne, one action

Don Gaspar Bonifaz de Escobedo y Godinez's Spanish Tercio 4 shot/4 pike, B Grade

Francisco de Menses' Spanish Tercio 4 shot/4 pike, B Grade

Centre Right – James Duke of York, two actions

The Kings Own English Regiment; 2 shot/1 pike, B Grade

Duke of York's Regiment: 2 shot/1 pike, C Grade

Middleton's Scots: 2 shot/1 pike, C Grade

Ormond's Irish Regiment: 2 shot/1 pike, C Grade

Duke of York's Life Guards - 2 bases horse, A2 Grade, pistols or cold steel - player's choice.

Centre Left – Marquis de Caracena, two actions

Albert François de Croy's Walloon Tercio: 4 shot/3 pike, C Grade

Henri de Melun, Senor de Risbourg's Walloon Tercio: 4 shot/3 pike, C Grade

Supporting Cavalry deployed with the foot

Württemberg's German Arquebusiers - 6 horse, C Grade, pistols

Metternich's German Arquebusiers - 6 horse, C Grade, pistols

La Fuente & Ryse Dragoons - 4 dragoons, C Grade

Reserve – Prince de Risbourg d'Espinoy, one action

Governor General's Lancer Guards - 3 cuirassiers, A2 Grade, cold steel

Cuirassiers of the Guard - 4 cuirassiers, B Grade, pistols

Commander of the Left Wing – Louis II Prince de Condé, 3 actions

French Foot – Comte de Coligny, one action

2 Battalions Regiment Condé: 4 shot/2 pike, C Grade

1 Battalion Regiment Persan: 2 shot/1 pike, C Grade

1 Battalion Regiment Guitaud: 2 shot/1 pike, C Grade

3 Sqns Condé's Horse: B grade, pistols or cold steel - player's choice

French Horse – Marquis de Boutteville, one action. All pistols or all cold steel - player's choice

Persan: 4 Horse, C Grade

Rochefort: 4 Horse, C Grade

Enghein: 4 Horse, C Grade

Notes:

Don Juan de Austria, governor-general of Flanders was noted for his caution and had done little to prevent the French advance. He is rated as a poor general and therefore only has one command action.

Although in rebellion at this time, the Prince de Condé was one of France's best generals. He therefore has 3 actions.