



# COMITATUS

Warfare in the Dark Ages

3rd - 11th C AD

Game Scenario

**Dorylaeum**

1 July 1097

## Historical Background

The Crusaders were on their way through Asia Minor to Antioch when their vanguard of Italo-Normans and Byzantines was hit by the Turkish army of Sultan Arslan as it was setting up camp.

The Turks were unaware that two more columns of Crusaders were nearby and launched their full attack against the Vanguard commanded by Count Bohemond. Bohemond dismounted his knights and held his ground, sending a message for help to the main column which was commanded by his rival Raymond de Saint Gilles.

The Turks were hard pressed to deal with the reinforcements and when a third column under Bishop Adhemar du Puy arrived in their rear they broke contact and left the way open to Antioch.

## The Game

This makes a good two player game but can be even more fun if there are at least several players with individual victory conditions (see below). This allows the rivalries between various historical characters, to be brought into play. Bohemond could, for example, be encouraged to try to defeat the Turks unaided (a difficult proposition) while Raymond will try to steal the credit for victory himself.

An additional player could control the small Byzantine Contingent, commanded by Taticius, with victory conditions aimed at encouraging him to avoid combat (whilst not actually allowing the Turks to win) and thereby helping as many troublesome Crusaders as possible realise their dream of becoming martyrs.

Taticius might also be encouraged to support Raymond's victory conditions (for example if Bohemond does not call for help), Taticius might do it for him.

There is no Commander in Chief on the Crusader side, just three independent Contingent Commanders none of whom have line of command over the others.

On the Turkish side, the Danishmends had been in open rebellion against the Seljuks and had only just patched over their quarrel to meet the common threat.

They might, therefore, be quite happy to see the Seljuks and others do most of the fighting.



*Most of the Turkish army was made up of light horse archers like these. They would shower their opponents with arrows and then charge home if the enemy began to waver. They were supported by a smaller number of heavier Ghulams.*

## Scale

1 Cavalry Stand = 300 men

1 Infantry Stand = 1000 men

## Terrain & Deployment

The Battlefield should be open rolling terrain with possibly a few copses of woods or orchards. The Turkish player lays out terrain choosing from the following:

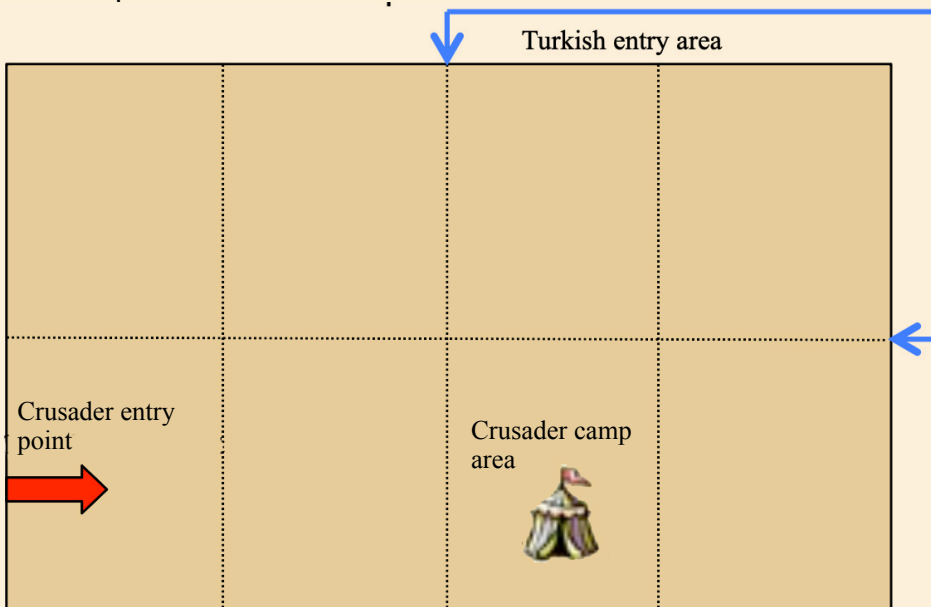
1-3 gentle hills

0-1 difficult terrain (olive groves, copse, orchard or similar)

The Crusader player (Bohemond if multiple players) may add one additional terrain piece from the above list.

All troops begin the game off table. The Byzantines enter automatically in March Column at the Crusader entry point on the first turn. The Vanguard follows also in March Column once the rear of the Byzantine column has cleared the table edge. The Crusader Main Body may arrive one turn after a messenger sent for help leaves the table or 4 turns after first contact with the Turks if no messenger is sent. The Main Body must roll a 4-6 on a D6 to arrive (+1 for each succeeding turn)

If the Vanguard reaches the camp area before contact is made, they will halt and begin to make camp. Whilst doing this, all the Crusader foot troops will become unformed (busy setting up), with all the Byzantines on guard. The knights will remain formed but dismounted in the centre of the camp area.



The Turks may enter in any formation on any turn, anywhere in the south east quadrant (as marked on the map). They must dice for arrival by contingent, arriving on a 3-6 (+1 for each subsequent roll).

They may choose to enter all at once or delay arrivals for some commands to increase uncertainty in the minds of the Crusader players.



## Crusader Order of Battle

### Byzantine Ally Command

8 stands chosen from the following:

**Commander:** Taticius, dice LPs

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Lance & Bow Cavalry, A Grade, High Morale

**Varadiots:** up to 2 Heavy Horse Archers, A Grade, Average Morale

**Other Cavalry:** up to 3 Lance & Bow, B Grade, Average Morale

**Infantry:** up to 2 Spearmen, C Grade, Average Morale

**Peltasts:** 2-4 Archers, C Grade, Average Morale

### Vanguard (Ally Command)

12 stands chosen from the following:

**Commander:** Bohemond, dice LPs, re-roll 2 once only.

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Knights, B Grade, Exceptional Morale

**Heavy Infantry:** 2-4 Shieldwall Infantry, C Grade, Average Morale

**Light Infantry:** 2-4 Archers and/or Crossbowmen, C Grade, Average Morale

**Pilgrims:** 2-4 Armed Rabble, C Grade, High Morale

### Baggage Wagons

#### Main Body (Ally Command)

14 stands chosen from the following (excluding baggage wagons):

**Commander:** Raymond, 3 CPs

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Shock Cav, B Grade, Exceptional Morale

**Other Knights & Sergeants:** 3-4 Shock Cav, C Grade, High Morale

**Heavy Infantry:** 3-4 Shieldwall Infantry, C Grade, Average Morale

**Light Infantry:** 3-4 Archers and/or Crossbows, C Grade, Average Morale

**Pilgrims:** 2-4 Armed Rabble, C Grade, High Morale

#### Baggage Wagons.

The Crusaders have no Commander in Chief. Each command acts independently as allies. Any attempt by any player to try to assert authority over others will cause the offended command to withdraw from the field.

Knights may dismount as understrength Spearmen.

## Turkish Order of Battle

Choose 30 Stands from the following:

### Reserve

**Commander in Chief:** Sultan Kilij Arslan, dice LPs, re-roll 2 once only.

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Lance & Bow, A Grade, Armoured horses, Exceptional Morale

**Seljuk Ghulams:** 4-6 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, High Morale

### Cappadocian Contingent

**Leader:** Emir Hassan, dice LPs

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Lance & Bow, B Grade, High Morale

**Turcomans:** 8-10 Light Horse Archers, C Grade, Average Morale

### Wagon with arrow re-supply

### Danishmend Ally Contingent

**Leader:** Danishmend, dice for LPs, re-roll 5 once only.

**Comitatus:** 1-2 Lance & Bow, B Grade, Average Morale

**Turcomans:** 8-12 Light Horse Archers, C Grade, Poor Morale

### Wagon with arrow re-supply

## Tactical Tips

The Turks have the initiative, picking where and when to attack, with very little the Crusaders can do about it. The Turks should try to wear down their opponents with archery fire, employing units in successive waves — shooting then withdrawing to be replaced by others. In this way the Crusaders will take constant DPs without being able to concentrate return shooting on any one unit. C Grade Crusaders will have difficulty in removing DPs without active intervention by their leaders. Ghulams should be kept nearby ready to charge home on any opponents who become shaken.

It is probably impossible for Bohemond to hold on without calling for help. Eventually his troops will become too worn down to hold off a Ghulam charge. The best Crusader tactic is to keep the knights out of trouble behind the infantry (possibly dismounted to reduce missile casualties). If Bohemond can hang on until help arrives, the Turks will have difficulty dealing with fresh troops.

## Special Rules

Movement and actions for Pilgrims are random. Once contact has been made, they must take a 'control test' each turn, even if being controlled by a leader. If they get a result of 5-6 they must advance to 4" from the nearest Turks and try to "convert the heathens". How the Turks decide to react to the word of God is completely up to the Turkish player.

Any Turcomans or Pilgrims coming within 4" of enemy baggage must roll a die. On a result of 6 they will ignore all other actions and leaders, and attempt to loot the baggage. This result take precedence over "converting the pagans", the lust for wealth being a greater attraction than the lust for souls.

## Victory Conditions

The Crusaders win if by the end of the 9th turn no more than 4 stands have been actually eliminated (not counting Pilgrims and not counting shaken stands). The Turks win if the Crusaders do not win and no more than 4 stands of Ghulams have been eliminated. Any other result is draw.

A player-character who is killed cannot win. Otherwise personal victory conditions are determined by adding the following points, reflecting the rivalry between the various leaders:



### **Bohemond**

Crusader Victory +3  
Raymond Killed +1  
Main Body off table on turn 7, +1

### **Raymond**

Crusader Victory +3  
Each Ghulam casualty caused by Raymond's troops +1  
Bohemond Killed +1

### **Taticius**

Draw +3  
Crusader Victory +2  
Each Byzantine casualty -1  
Bohemond killed +1

### **Sultan Kilij Arslan & Cappadocian**

Turkish Victory +3

### **Danishmend**

Turkish Victory +2  
Draw +1  
Each Seljuk Ghulam casualty +1  
Each Danishmend casualty -1