



COMITATUS

Warfare in the Dark Ages

3rd - 11th C AD

Game Scenario

Manzikert

August 1071

Historical Background

In 1071 the East Roman Emperor Romanus IV gathered a huge army with the intent of breaking the growing power of the Seljuk Turks. Muhammad Ibn Dawud Çağrı, known as 'Alp Arslan' (strong as a lion) was forced to retreat when the Byzantines (as the East Romans are now called) cut his lines of communication. The two armies converged on Manzikert. All the odds were stacked in the favour of the Byzantines. They had the initiative, they outnumbered the Turks, and they had the advantage of position. That all did not go according to plan is now well known.



The Byzantines advanced on the Turkish camp but the Turks simply melted away, showering the Byzantines with arrows as they withdrew. Without being able to bring the main Turkish force to battle the Emperor decided to fall back on Manzikert. Then the Turks struck. The Byzantine reserve commanded by Andronikos Dukas (who's loyalty was suspect) fled the field instead of covering the withdrawal. The Emperor made a last stand and was killed alongside many of his men. The disaster at Manzikert broke the power of the East Roman Empire forever.

The Game

To refight Manzikert requires a large table (12x6 foot for 28mm figures) and a degree of hidden movement for the Turks to recreate their hit and run tactics. The potential treachery of Andronikos Dukas also needs to be taken into account.



Byzantine Order of Battle

Scale: 1 cavalry and light infantry stand = 400 men, 1 heavy infantry stand = 800 men

Emperor Romanus, Commander in Chief. 3 Leadership Points (LPs)). Centre 6400 men

Romanus' Hetaeria (Comitatus): 1 Cataphracts, A Grade, Morale +2.

Klibanophoroi: 3 Cataphracts, A Grade, Morale 0

Varangian Guard: 2 Shock Infantry, A Grade, Morale +2

Armenians: 3 Spear & Bow Infantry, C Grade, Morale 0



Nikephoros Byrennios (4 LPs). Left wing 5600 men

Nikephoros' Hetaeria: 1 Lance & Bow cavalry, A Grade, Armoured, Morale +2

Scholae: 3 Lance & Bow cavalry, A Grade, Morale 0

Excubitors: 3 Lance & Bow cavalry, A Grade, Morale 0

Icanati: 3 Lance & Bow cavalry, A Grade, Morale 0

Tourkopouloi (Christian Turks): 4 light horse archers, B Grade, Morale 0

Theodosius Alyates (3 LPs). Right wing 6000 men

Theodosius' Hetaeria: 1 Shock Cavalry, A Grade, Morale +2

Anatolian Cursores: 2 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale 0

Anatolian Defensores: 2 Shock Cavalry, B Grade, Morale 0

Georgians: 2 Shock Cavalry, B Grade, Morale 0

Anatolian levy: 2 Shieldwall Infantry, C Grade, Morale -1

Uzes (Turks): 4 light horse archers, B Grade, Morale -1

Andronikos Dukas (3 LPs). Reserve line 7200 men

Andronikos' Hetaeria: 1 Shock Cavalry, A Grade, Morale +2

Latinikoi (Normans): 2 Shock Cavalry, B Grade, Morale 0

Akriotoi (Byzantine nobles): 3 Shock Cavalry, C Grade, Morale +2

Scutato: 4 Heavy Infantry Spearmen, B Grade, Armoured, Morale 0

Archers: 4 Light Infantry Archers, B Grade, Morale 0

Seljuk Order of Battle

Scale: 1 cavalry stand = 400 men



Sultan Alp Arslan, Commander in Chief (4 LPs). 2400 men

Sultan's Askar: 2 Lance & Bow, Armoured, B Grade, Morale +3

Elite Ghulams: 4 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +3.

Sav-Tekin (2iC 4 LPs) 8800 men

Sav-Tekin's Askar: 1 Lance & Bow cavalry, B Grade, Morale +3

Ghulams: 4 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

Light Cavalry: 4 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

Afsin Ibn Bakgi (Turcoman subordinate leader 3 LPs)

Comitatus: 1 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

Turcomans: 12 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale 0

Sanduk al-Turki (3 LPs) 8800 men

Sanduk's Askar: 1 Lance & Bow cavalry, B Grade, Morale +3

Ghulams: 4 Heavy Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

Light Cavalry: 4 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

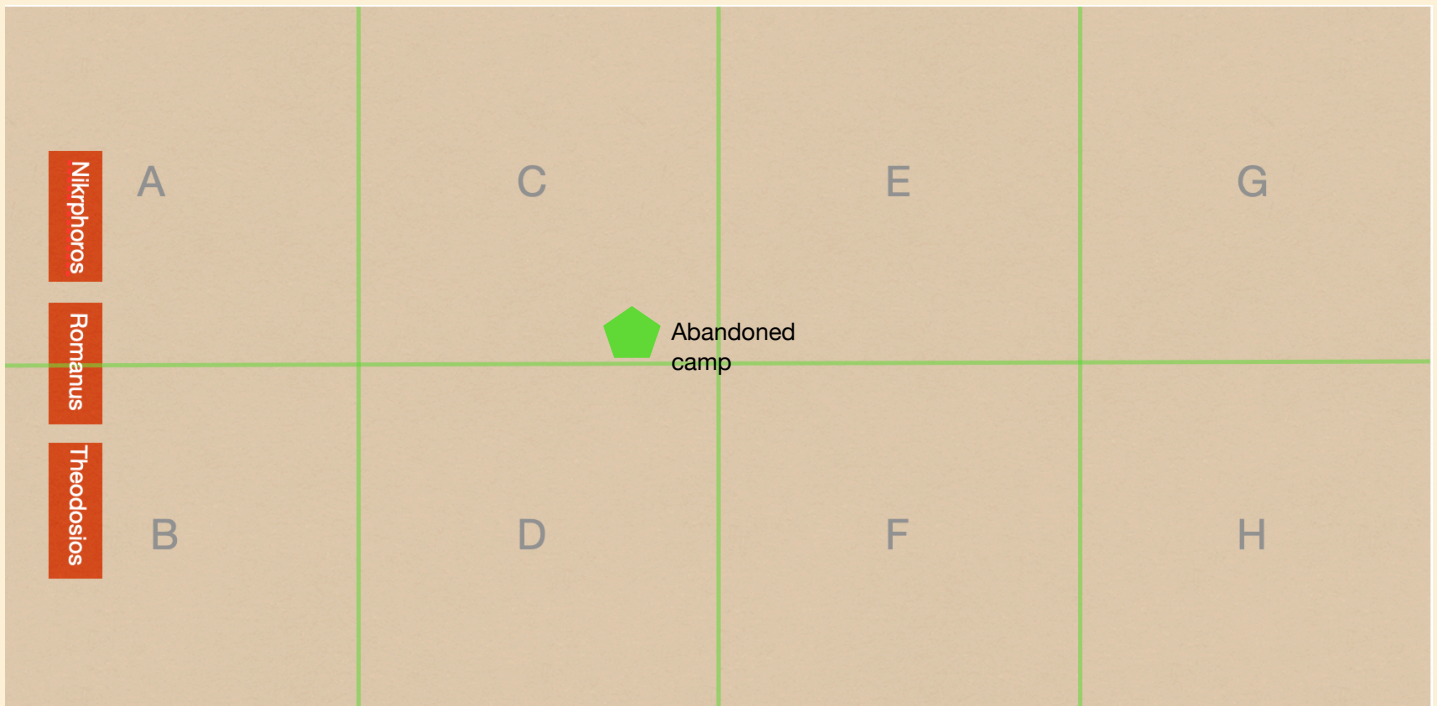
Malik Danishmand (Turcoman subordinate leader 3 LPs)

Comitatus: 1 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale +2

Turcomans: 12 Light Horse Archers, B Grade, Morale 0

Note: Turcomans may be in units of 4 or 6 men each. Ghulams in units of 2 or 4.

Deployment



The table is roughly divided into eight 3ft square zones as shown on the sketch map above. This also shows the approximate initial Byzantine deployment. The terrain is open with a few low hills. The ground rises with more hills towards the Turkish table end (zones G & H). There is a small forward camp which has been abandoned by the Seljuks although the Byzantines will not know that it has been abandoned until they reach it.

Byzantine Deployment. The Byzantine forward divisions may be deployed anywhere in zones A & B up to 1 foot in from their table edge as indicated on the map. The reserve division is initially off table and may deploy once enough space has been cleared for them as the front divisions advance. In order for the reserve line to come on table they must roll 5-6, +1 for each succeeding turn.

Byzantine Objective. Force an engagement with the less numerous Seljuks and defeat them before dusk. If this is not possible, withdraw in good order back to Manzikert with the bulk of the army in tact to fight another day. In order to retire the Emperor must either send new orders to his divisions or retire himself. In the latter case the rest of the army will see his standard retiring and should follow suit.

Seljuk Deployment. The two Turcoman divisions may be deployed anywhere in zones C,D,E, & F. Only 1 base of each unit needs to be deployed until the enemy come within bow range. One additional 'dummy base' (small scouting party) may be deployed with each Turcoman division. Once enemy come within bow range they will disperse to join their actual unit.

The three main divisions may be deployed anywhere in zones E,F,G & H. They do not have to be placed on table until Byzantine heavy troops enter the adjacent zone to their front or flank or if they wish to move to another zone (other than to the rear or if no enemy in adjacent zone)

Seljuk Objective. Wear the enemy down and avoid decisive combat until the odds have been evened and the opportunity is presented to destroy them.

Scenario Specific Rules

Seljuk off table movement. Seljuk light cavalry may voluntarily move off table. If they do so they may return the following turn anywhere within 10JTs of the place they left as long as it is beyond 5JTs of any enemy. They must pass a control test to do this (unless leader is with them and controlling). *Repeat Last Move* will allow them to continue their off-table-on-table move but not Halt. Alternatively they could wait one further turn and then reappear up to 20 JTs from where they left.

If a unit is forced off-table (evade, rout, retire) the normal off-table rules apply (p. 43 main rules).

Andronikos' treachery. Once Andronikos' division is on table it may not advance beyond zones A/B. In order for him to do so the Emperor will need to send him a direct order either by messenger or going in person himself. Roll 1 AvD to see how he reacts to the order:

2 = Treachery. Andronikos will not send any troops out of zones A/B for the duration of the game. The messenger meets with an unfortunate accident.

3-4 = Obsequious Response. Andronikos sends a positive response back. He will obey orders for 1 turn then halt again.

6 = Loyal. Andronikos obeys orders.

+1 to die roll if the Emperor delivers the orders in person.

-1 to die roll for each successive messenger sent.

