

Battle of Asheen

A fictional battle between the Hungarian army of Mattias Convinus (around 1460 AD) and the Sassanid Persians (around 600 AD). The armies are mostly mounted, with the Hungarians having superior foot troops. The Hungarian mounted troops are all knights or skirmishers, while the majority of the Sassanid mounted troops are bow-armed heavy cavalry. The battle was fought on 28 July 2007.

Order of Battle

Hungarians (Skilled general, +1)

1 x Hungarian nobles (U), CO heavy horse, 3"
2 x German mercenary knights (K), CO heavy horse, 3"
2 x Szekelers (Z), SK light horse, javelin, missile, 5"
2 x Hungarian light horse (L), SK light horse, missile, 5"
2 x Hungarian spearmen (P), CO heavy infantry, trained, 2"
1 x Hussite flail-men (F), CO medium infantry, trained, 2"
2 x Hungarian archers (A), SK light infantry, missile, trained, 3"
1 x German handgunners (G), SK light infantry, missile, trained, 3"
Total 13 units

Sassanid Persians (Skilled general, +1)

3 x Barded cavalry (B), LO heavy horse, missile, trained, 4"
2 x Cavalry (C), LO medium horse, missile, trained, 5"
1 x Elephants (E), LO heavy elephant, 3"
1 x Nomad horse archers (N), SK light horse, missile, 5"
1 x Hun horse archers (H), SK light horse, javelin, missile, 5"
1 x Daylami (D), LO medium infantry, javelin, 3"
2 x Archers (R), SK light infantry, missile, 3"
2 x Levy (Y), CO medium infantry, poor, untrained, 2"
Total 13 units

Scenario rules

Any CO troops entering the marsh, town or woods are disordered. This cannot be cured until they have left the terrain. The road has no effect on movement. Ranged missile fire is impossible between units, both of which are in woods or town. Units must be on the edge of a wood or town to fire at a target outside the terrain.

Battlefield

The battle was fought on a 4' square table. It looked more or less like this:

```
--- Hungarians ---  
....r.....  
mm..r.....  
mm..r.....ww  
....r.....w  
....r....rrr  
...ttrrrr.ww  
rrrtt.....ww  
....r.....  
....r.....  
....r.....  
--- Sassanids ----
```

Terrain key:

r Road
w Wood
t Town (difficult going)
m Marsh (difficult going)

Initial deployment

--- Hungarians ---

...Kr.U..K..
mm.LLPFPZZ..
mm..r.....ww
....r.....w
....r....rrr
...ttrrrr.ww
rrrtt.....ww
.N.RRBBBCCD.
..H.rE.....
....rYY.....
--- Sassanids ----

Note: Each “P” is supported by an “A”, and the “F” is supported by “G” (omitted for space).

Turns 1-3

The Hungarians moved first. The first few turns were spent advancing, hindered by some poor command die rolling on the Sassanid flanks. The Sassanid commander decided to relocate the Hun skirmishers from his left flank to serve as a right flank reserve:

....r.....
mm..K...U...
mm.LrPFP.Kww
....LAGAZZ.w
....r....rrr
...RtBBBCCww
rNrtRE.....ww
....r.....D.
....HYY.....

Turns 4-5

More manoeuvring and the opening salvos of arrow-fire:

....r.....
mm..r.....
mm..K...UKww
...LLPFPZZ.w
....rBBBCCrr
.N.RRErrr.ww
rrrtt.....Dw
....r...H...
....rYY.....

Turn 6

The Hungarians launched their light horse in against the flank of the left-most Sassanid cavalry. Though initially successful, the Hungarians were caught in a fight they could not win against their

better-armed opponents and were driven back with heavy casualties. Sassanis missile fire caused many casualties among the Hungarian foot skirmishers, forcing back a unit of archers and eliminating the German handgunners - first blood to the Sassanids!

....r.....
mm..r.....
mm..K...UKww
...LLFPFZZ.w
....RBBCCrr
.N.RtErrr.Dw
rrrtt..H..ww
....r.Y.....
....rY.....

Turn 7

The Hungarians moved up their knights along the line, and also their infantry, dropping the remaining skirmish infantry to the rear. The Sassanids resonded by charging two of their heavy cavalry into the Hungarian infantry, and their two medium cavalry into the Szekelers on the Hungarian left flank. The Heavy cavalry charged home, routing two of the Hungarian infantry units and leaving just one unit of spearmen standing steady to hold the line. The Sassanid medium cavalry were less successful, managing to chase away the Szekelers but were unable to charge home against the German knights to the Szekelers' rear.

....r.....
mm..r...ZZ..
mm..rPFAUKww
...LKB.P.C.w
...LREBBCCrrr
.N.Rtrrrr.Dw
rrrtt..H..ww
....rYY.....
....r.....

Turn 8

On their left wing, the Hungarians charged both units of knights against the Sassanid medium cavalry. The German knights charged home vigirously, completely destroying the Sassanid cavalry, but the Hungarian knights were disordered by the Sassanid archery and their charge was repulsed. The remaining central Hungarian spear unit drove off the Sassanid heavy cavalry which had failed to break it in the previous turn, then followed up into the right-most Sassanid heavy cavalry and routed it too! The left-most Sassanid heavy cavalry unit pursued and destroyed the second Hungarian spear unit and its supporting archers, leaving it isolated behind the Hungarian battle line.

....r.....
mm..r.....
mm..rBFAZZww
..L.K..PUC.w
.N.LREB..KDr
...RtrrrHB.ww
rrrtt.Y...ww
....rY.....
....r.....

Turn 9

The Hungarian spearmen charged the Sassanid heavy cavalry to their front, but made no progress against them. The Hun skirmishers rather ambitiously charged the Hungarian knights, but failed to make any impression. more seriously, the Sassanids failed to reface two of their heavy cavalry units, leaving them vulnerable to attacks from the rear. On the Sassanid left, the archers started to move aggressively against the Hungarian horsemen, and succeeded in driving them back with sustained and accurate archery.

```
....r.....  
mm..r.....  
mm..rBFAZZww  
..L.KE.PUCDw  
.N.LR..BHKrr  
...RtrrrB.ww  
rrrttYY...ww  
....r.....  
....r.....
```

Turn 10

The Hungarian knights destroyed the Huns and the German mercenaries charged a Sassanid heavy cavalry unit on the rear, destroying it. The Hussite flail-men also managed to charge into the rear of the Sassanid cavalry to the rear of the Hungarian line, and destroyed the cavalry in a single furious charge. The other German mercenary knight unit charged the Sassanid elephant, but the elephants had much the better of the fight and the knights were driven back with serious losses. In their turn, all the Sassanids could do was charge home the elephants against the fleeing German knights, killing them all but leaving the elephants stranded a long way from the closing stages of the battle. The central Sassanid heavy cavalry pushed back the Hungarian spearmen, but failed to break through their tenacious defence.

```
....r.....  
mm..r.....  
mm..EF.PZZww  
..LLR..BUCDw  
.N.Rr....rrr  
...ttrrrK.ww  
rrrttYY...ww  
....r.....  
....r.....
```

Turn 11

In the centre, the battle between the surviving Sassanid heavy cavalry and the Hungaran spears continued without resolution. The German knights had to rest their horses, allowing the Sassanid levy to charg them (!) but the unskilled Levy were repulsed and disorganized for their trouble.

```
....r.....  
mm..r....Z..  
mmL.EF.PZDww  
.L..r..BUC.w  
.N.RR....rrr  
...ttrYYK.ww  
rrrtt.....ww  
....r.....  
....r.....
```

Turn 12

The Sassanid heavy cavalry continued to push back the Hungarian spearmen, leaving their flanks dangerously exposed. The German knights broke through the Sassanid levy and pursued the survivors, while the repeated Sassanid archery on their left flank finally managed to destroy one of the Hungarian light horse units.

```
.....r.....  
mm..r..PAZ..  
mm..E.FBZDww  
.L..r...UC.w  
.N.R.R...rrr  
...ttrYKr.ww  
rrrtt.Y...ww  
.....r.....  
.....r.....
```

Turn 13

The Sassanid heavy cavalry were charged on the flank by the remaining unit of Hungarian archers, and finally routed. The German knights finished off the remainder of the fleeing Sassanid levy, and the Sassanids surrendered.

```
.....r.....  
mm..r..P.Z..  
mm..E.FAZDww  
.L..r...UC.w  
.N.R.R...rrr  
...ttrYrr.ww  
rrrtt.K...ww  
.....r.....  
.....r.....
```

Aftermath

I forgot to use the generals in combat, which would have made some of the attacks more effective but probably would have had no effect on the outcome (since I forgot for both sides).

The Hungarians were much more aggressive with their infantry than in the last game, and the infantry suffered as a result; still, at least this took a lot of pressure off the Hungarian knights, which had a much better game as a result. The Sassanid elephants were very effective once they got into combat, but they took a long time to do this and ended up badly out of position and had no further effect on the game.

The armies looked about equal, with no obvious advantage to one side over the other. There were perhaps there too many skirmishers on the table; since it is almost impossible to bring them to battle, all they did was stand off from one another and hope to roll sixes for their shooting. This is the first battle I've played with elephants; they look perhaps too powerful, especially on a battlefield with no phalanxes.

Next time, I need some predetermined victory conditions - this battle fragmented over a large area, with each unit fighting to the death. In reality one side or other would have broken off and retreated (or surrendered) once their army cohesion had collapsed.

