

# Battle of Eldwood

The fourth hypothetical battle between the Hungarian army of Mattias Convinus (around 1460 AD) and the Sassanid Persians (around 600 AD). The battle was fought on 1 August 2007. This battle was slightly smaller than the last two I had played with these armies, and I added baggage and downgraded the generals.

## Order of Battle

### Normans (Skilled general, +1)

5 x Milites (M), CO heavy horse, 3"  
2 x Breton cavalry (R), LO medium horse, 5"  
1 x Scouts (S), SK light horse, 5"  
2 x Crossbowmen (X), SK light foot, missile, trained, 3"  
Total 10 combat units

### Sassanid Persians (Average general, +0)

3 x Barded cavalry (B), LO heavy horse, missile, trained, 4"  
2 x Cavalry (C), LO medium horse, missile, trained, 5"  
1 x Nomad horse archers (N), SK light horse, missile, 5"  
1 x Hun horse archers (H), SK light horse, javelin, missile, 5"  
2 x Archers (A), SK light infantry, missile, 3"  
1 x Daylami (D), LO medium infantry, javelins, 3"  
2 x Levy (L), CO light infantry, poor, untrained, 2"  
2 Baggage wagons (W)  
Total 12 combat units

## Scenario rules

River is impassable except at two bridges, which are treated as difficult going. Only the Hungarian militia may deploy in the town. One unit of Hungarian baggage is deployed in the town to symbolize the morale effect of the Hungarian town falling to the Sassanids.

## Victory conditions

The first army to lose 4 units becomes demoralized and loses the game. For this calculation, all foot and skirmish units count as half a unit each.

## Battlefield

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

```
----- Normans ----  
www . . . . .  
www . . . . . ww  
www . . . . . ww  
ww . . . . . ww  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . tt . . . . ww  
. . . tt . . . . www  
. . . . . www  
. . . . .  
--- Sassanids ----
```

Terrain key:

w Wood (difficult going, blocks missile fire)

t Town (difficult going, blocks missile fire)

### Initial deployment

```

----- Normans -----
wwXRMMMMMRX.
www...S...ww
www.....ww
ww.....ww
.....
.....
...tt.....ww
...ttAA.Nwww
..H.DLLBBwww
.CB..WWC....
--- Sassanids -----

```

### Turns 1-3

The Normans moved first. The first three turns were spent advancing.

```

www.....
www.....ww
wwXRMMMMMRXw
ww.....S...ww
...H...N...
.....
.CBttAABBCww
...ttLL...www
.....www
.....WW.....

```

### Turn 4-5

The Hun light horse charged the Breton cavalry, and was repulsed by a hail of javelins. The Bretons charged back, but were in turn driven back by the Huns' shooting. The Sassanid commander joined his left-most heavy cavalry and prepared to engage the Normans.

```

www.....
www.....ww
ww.....ww
wwXRMMMMMRXw
..CB..S.NC..
..H...ABB...
...tDA...ww
...ttLL...www
.....www
.....WW.....

```

### Turn 6

The right-hand Norman knights charged the Sassanid heavy cavalry, but was dirordered on the approach by Sassanid fire and the Sassanid counter-charge sent the Normans fleeing in disorder. On the far left Bretons charged the Sassanid cavalry, but were halter by their missile fire before they could make contact. In the centre, one of the Norman knights was forced to charge the Nomad light horse which was blocking its advance - the nomads, of course, fled. The Sassanid general charged the fleeing Norman knights and destroyed them utterly. One of the Sassanid heavy cavalry charged into the approaching wall of Norman knights, rather than be charged by them, and

managed to push the knight back in disorder. On the far right of the Sassanid line, the medium cavalry charged the Bretons, and was halted by their javelin fire.

www.....  
www.....ww  
wwX.....ww  
ww.RB.S..RXw  
..CH.MMMMC..  
.....AABB...  
...tD...N.ww  
...ttLL..www  
.....www  
.....WW.....

Casualties: Sassanids: 0, Normans: 1 (Knights)

### Turn 7

The Norman commander (with the central unit of knights) charged into the Sassanid heavy cavalry which had charged in the centre, breaking it and sending the Sassanids fleeing. The Hun cavalry charged the Bretons, but only pushed them back a short distance.

www.....  
www.....ww  
wwX..S....ww  
wwCRB...MRww  
...H.MMMBCX.  
....DAA.....  
...tt..BN.ww  
...ttLL..www  
.....www  
.....WW.....

Casualties: Sassanids: 0, Normans: 1

### Turn 8

The Sassanid heavy cavalry managed to break through in the centre, destroying the disordered unit of Norman knights.

www.....  
www.....ww  
www..S....ww  
wXCRB...BRww  
...H.MMM.CX.  
....D.....  
...ttAA.N.ww  
...ttLLB.www  
.....www  
.....WW.....

Casualties: Sassanids: 0, Normans: 2 (Knights)

### Turn 9

The left Breton cavalry managed to break the Sassanid medium cavalry, but on the opposite flank the Sassanid cavalry destroyed the Bretons. The right flank Norman crossbowmen charged into the rear of the Sassanid cavalry, but failed to make any impression and were in turn ridden charged by the Huns, whom they managed to resist.

www.....

```

www.....ww
www..S....ww
wXC..B..B.ww
..H....M.RX.
....DM.MN...
...ttAA..Cww
...ttLLB.www
.....www
.....WW.....

```

Casualties: Sassanids: 0, Normans: 3 (Bretons)

### Turn 10

The Sassanid cavalry fled the Norman crossbowmen to their rear, while the crossbowmen in turn resisted the Huns' attacks. The Norman knights charged the Sassanid archers, who evaded, and reached the Sassanid levy, who fell back in disorder but did not break. In the centre, the unit of Norman knights to the rear was driven back by the Sassanid heavy cavalry, while the Sassanid commander brought up his heavy cavalry to complete the Normans knights' destruction.

```

www.....
www.....ww
wwwC.S....ww
wX....B.B.ww
..H....M..X.
.....D..NR..
...tt..M.Cww
...ttM...www
.....LLB.www
.....WW.....

```

Casualties: Sassanids: 0, Normans: 3

### Turn 11

The Norman scouts charged into the Sassanid commander's unit, forcing it to recoil into the fleeing Hungarian nobles, and the Sassanids were destroyed! Norman hopes for a turn in the tide of the battle were short lived, however, because the other Sassanid heavy cavalry completed the rout of the Norman knights, which was enough to break the Norman morale and end the game.

```

www.....
www.....ww
wwwC.....ww
wX....S....ww
..H....B.X..
.....D..N...
...tt....Rww
...ttM.MCwww
.....LLB.www
.....WW.....

```

Casualties: Sassanids: 1 (cavalry), Normans: 4 (knights)

### Aftermath

Although the Sassanids won with only one casualty, they ended the game with their entire centre either in retreat or close to breaking. Had the game lasted another couple of turns, the result could have been very different.

The Norman commander only managed to fight once, and spent the rest of the game advancing while the Sassanids avoided him. In contrast, the Sassanid commander led his attack on the

Norman flank, and was instrumental in his army's victory (although his unit was destroyed on the last turn of the game, due to poor generalship).

The Sassanid cavalry's combination of fast movement, good armour and missile capability makes them powerful in the attack and resilient in defence. They can outrun CO cavalry who beat them in combat, whereas fleeing CO cavalry are ridden down by the faster Sassanids. The faster movement also gives them better manoeuvrability and a better chance to get the first charge in.