

# SCENARIOS for DELUXE ALEXANDER

## Great Battles of the Achaemenidae

BY STEPHEN JACKSON



*Ever wonder how those Persians of yours would do if they didn't have to tackle an enemy who had the Macedonian command structure working in their favor? Tired of seeing your troops shattered by hypaspists and companions? Well just try these battles from the heyday of the Persian Empire.*

Often dismissed as masses of peasants who had to race their leaders in fleeing the field, the armies of Persia had conquered and held for over two centuries (for the most part) an empire stretching from India to Thrace; from Egypt to the Caucasus, before falling to the talent and organization of Macedon. They were a force to be reckoned with, having many strengths to offset their weaknesses.

### **Battle of Plataea, 479 B.C.**

After the Battle of Marathon in 490 BC (see *C3i* Nr.1 for scenario), the Persians retired back into Asia, but the blow to Achaemenid prestige rankled. When Xerxes succeeded his father Darius I in 486 BC, he began planning for an invasion to subdue the troublesome Greeks.

In 480 BC, Xerxes set out with a large army and crossed the Hellespont via pontoon bridges in what is still considered an amazing feat of engineering. He marched along the coast and encountered a small Greek force at Thermopylae under the Spartan King Leonidas. For several days the Persians were stymied, assaulting the pass with heavy losses, until they discovered trails around the Greek force. The Persians enveloped the Greeks from both sides and annihilated them. At the same time, a Greek fleet fought an indecisive battle at Artemisium to delay the Persian advance.

Marching into central Greece, several city states went over to the Persians, most notably Thebes. Xerxes entered Athens and sacked the city, but the population had been evacuated to the island of Salamis. The Athenian Themistocles led a united Greek fleet at Salamis in a crushing defeat of the Persian fleet, mainly composed of

Phoenician, Egyptian, Ionian, and Cypriot squadrons.

Following the loss of his fleet, Xerxes immediately withdrew back to Asia. His likely reason was to head off any attempts against him at home when news of the defeat arrived. He left Mardonius with a picked force from the army to continue the subjugation of Greece.

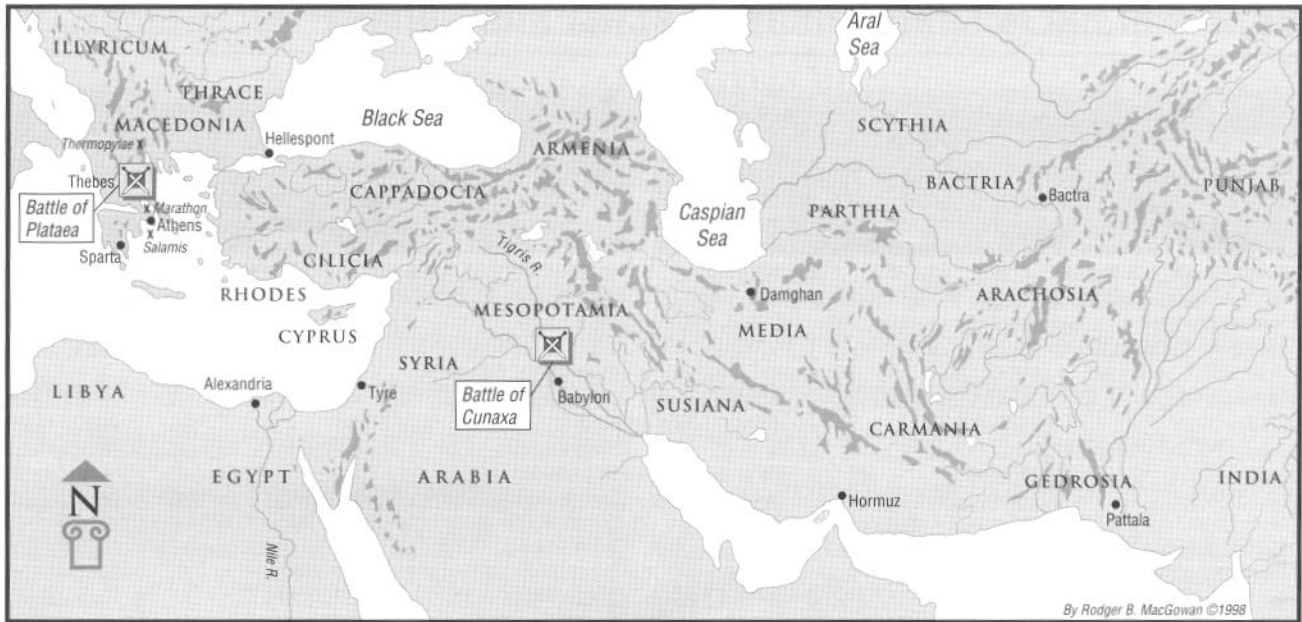
The Peloponnesians initially wished to fortify the Isthmus of Corinth, abandoning northern Greece. Amid much bickering and Athenian threats to seek peace or even alliance with the Persians, an allied army was formed under the Spartan Pausanias, regent for the young King Pleistarchus. The Greeks moved opposite the Persians and their Greek allies in Boeotia, always careful to stay in terrain that negated the usefulness of Mardonius' cavalry. According to Herodotus, the Greek army supposedly consisted of 10,000 Lacedaemonian (Spartan and allied/subject) hoplites, 1,500 Tegeans, 5,000 Corinthians, 3,000 Sicyons, 3,000 Megarans, 8,000 Athenians, 1,800 Thespians, and troops from some fifteen other city-states each numbered in the hundreds. Herodotus then goes on to say that the Spartans fielded 35,000 light troops, and the allies another 35,000. These numbers, especially the light troops, are certainly suspect. Delbrück fairly convincingly reduces these numbers to around 20,000 hoplites, and at most the same amount of light troops, some of which weren't armed and were probably servants or slaves to well-to-do hoplites. Many of them were guarding the mountain passes in Pausanias' rear in any event. The Persian army was most certainly of similar strength and was composed of Persians, Medes, Bactrians,

Indians, Sacae, and other smaller contingents. Substantial numbers of troops were provided by Thebes and Thessaly, as well as other northern Greek states. King Alexander II of Macedon provided Mardonius with troops and cavalry, but he hedged his bets by also providing information on Persian troop movements to the Greek forces, asking only that they remember his friendship.

The two armies sat opposite each other for eight days, during which Persian cavalry harassed the Greek troops and tried to lure them into the open. In a notable skirmish, the popular Persian cavalry commander Masistius was killed, throwing the Persian force into mourning. As the two armies jockeyed for position, the Persians managed to capture a supply convoy of 500 wagons, and to poison the Spring of Gargaphia, Pausanias' water supply. Pausanias was now in a difficult position, and decided to withdraw and consolidate his supply line. In the night, the *less reliable* units of the Greek center withdrew to hold the new position, but became disoriented in the dark. They ended up under the walls of Plataea and camped until morning. Meanwhile the Spartan right and Athenian left stood until first light, then began their own withdrawal.

In the Persian camp, Artabazus had been trying to convince Mardonius to withdraw to Thebes and hold there until the Greek coalition fell apart. He reasoned that an army of citizen militia cannot stay in the field for an extended period of time. Mardonius, possibly under pressure from Xerxes, desired a quicker resolution. When news of the Pausanias' retreat arrived, Mardonius saw his chance to smash the Greek army while disorganized. Artabazus still counseled caution but Mardonius ordered an immediate attack.

The allied Greek & Thessalian cavalry on the right forced the Athenians to turn at bay, while Mardonius and the



**The Battle of Plataea, 479 B.C. and the Battle of Cunaxa, 401 B.C.**

Persians did the same for the Spartans. The Thebans and other Medizing Greeks pressed the Athenians but the Megarans and other allies came to their aid, and a typical hoplite shoving match ensued, though the Theban cavalry managed to inflict some heavy casualties.

The Spartans crouched behind their shields under heavy Persian arrow fire, while the Corinthians and other Peloponnesians rushed to their aid and plug the hole on the Greek center. Pausanias made good use of the priests with him by convincing them to declare the omens for attack unfavorable. This kept the Greeks from charging forward too early, leaving them vulnerable to missile fire and cavalry in the rear. By the time the Persian infantry was close enough for the heavily armored hoplites to catch, the auguries suddenly became favorable and the Spartans charged. In heavy fighting Mardonius was killed and the Persians scattered. The Spartans pursued and slaughtered most of them, eventually hammering their way into Mardonius' camp for some well earned looting. The Thebans and other Persian allies withdrew in fairly good order.

Artabazus the reluctant warrior was just now crossing the Asopus Ridge. He took one look and set off for the

Hellespont as fast as he could, telling everyone he met that Mardonius had won the battle. Some suspect that his late arrival on the battlefield was intentional, but we can't know for sure.

**Aftermath**  
The Persians withdrew from Greece. The Greeks marched to Thebes and besieged it until the Theban leaders were handed over for execution. In the meantime, a Greek expedition to Asia defeated the Persians at Mycale on the same day as Plataea. Pausanias liberated Byzantium and went on to invade Cyprus, taking it from Persia. Ultimately, Pausanias aimed for personal domination in Greece and was accused of treason by instigating with the Persians. He was recalled to Sparta where he committed suicide. The Admiral Themistocles was also implicated and exiled, so ironically the two commanders who drove the Persians out were later condemned as traitors.

As Greece went back to warfare between the city-states, Persia once more took the offensive in Asia and regained her provinces there. Periodic Greek attempts in Asia would ultimately be futile until the time of Alexander the Great.

**Map**  
Use the Pelium map. The 60xx row is the North edge. The resemblance to

the actual battlefield is uncanny, except for scale. The map should be some 20-30% larger. To account for this, the number of men per size point has been increased accordingly. The River Axios does not exist.

**Counters**  
The Persians use blue counters from **Deluxe Alexander** and Diadochoi, blue-green hoplite units from **Diadochoi**, and several Persian counters from the SPQR module **War Elephant**. The Greeks use purple counters from **Alex Deluxe**, black Spartan hoplites from **Diadochoi**, and one Athenian counter from **War Elephant**. Substitutes are provided for players without that module.

- Special Rules**
- 1) Spartan hoplites may use the Spartan Withdrawal and Spartan Reverse Move Charge rules from the Chaeronea scenario.
  - 2) The town of Pelium is the city of Plataea. No unit may enter the city, as they have shut their gates for the duration of the battle.
  - 3) If green Indian units are used, 'slippage' is not in effect, but other rules pertaining to Indian archers are.
  - 4) Timagenides, Artabazus, and Arsites are Finished at the start of the first turn.

# Battles of the Achaemenidae: Plataea and Cunaxa

## THE BATTLE OF PLATAEA, 479 BC

### Initial Deployment

#### Persian Deployment

Unit(s)	Hex(es)	Facing	Counter	Notes
Mardonius [OC] (use Memnon)	4225		A	
Artabazus (Wing) (use Brsntes)	6014		A	
Timagenides (Wg) (use Boitos)	4808		D	[a]
Aspodorus (use Nearchos)	4901		D	[b]
Greek LC 1-2 (blue-green)	4900, 4903	S	D	
Tpuria LN 1-2	4901, 4902	S	A	[c]
GrkMrc LP 1-2	4804, 4813	S	A	
Greek HI/HO 1-4 (blue-green)	4805 - 4812	S	D	
Indian LI Archer 1-2	4720, 4621	SW	WE	[d]
Sacaen MI 1-2	4919, 4820	SW	WE	[e]
Immortal MI 1-3	4521, 4422, 4322	SW	A	
Median SK Archer 1-2	4219, 4221	S	A	
Persian SK Javelin 1-2	4223, 4323	S	A	
Royal Guard HC 1	4224	SW	A	
Asthippoi HC	4124	SW	D	
Sacia LC Archer 1	4125	SW	A	
Persia LC Archer 5	4225	SW	A	
Median LC Archer 5	6013	S	A	
Bactrian CAT HC 6	6014	S	A	
Sitcena SK Archer 1-2	6015, 6023	S	A	
Hyracanian LI Javelinist	6016	S	WE	[f]
Babylon LI Archer 1	6017	S	WE	[e]
Caria LI 1-3	6018, 6019, 6020	S	A	
Anatolian LI Archer 5	6021	S	A	
Ethiopian LI Archer 1	6022	S	WE	[e]

[a] Timagenides may only command Greek units (all hoplites, peltasts, and the units under Aspodorus).

[b] Aspodorus may only command Greek cavalry units.

[c] Considered 'Greek' for this battle. Theban, Thessalian or Macedonian; you pick.

[d] Or use green Indian LI Archers.

[e] Or use Tribal MI 1-2.

[f] Or use green Indian LI Javelinist.

#### LINE COMMAND ELIGIBILITY:

The following comprise lines.  
Hoplites (both normal and double sized)  
LI - MI - SK

#### RETREAT EDGE:

**Persians:** North edge of map.  
**Greeks:** South edge of map.

#### VICTORY CONDITIONS:

The Greek Army withdraws when it has accumulated 58 rout points. The Persian Army withdraws when it has accumulated 59 rout points. If both sides withdraw at the same time the Greeks win.

#### Greek Deployment

Unit(s)	Hex(es)	Facing	Counter	Notes
Pausanias [OC] (use Parmenion)	3718		A	
Aristides (Wing) (use Eudamus)	4507		D	
Andromachus	3905		A	[a]
GrkMrc LP 1	4405	NW	A	
Athens HI/HO 1-3	4505-4510	N	A	
GrkMrc LP 2	4411	NE	A	
ScythPol SK Archer	4311	NE	WE	[b]
Megara HI/HO	4203-4204	N	A	
Leucra HI/HO	4102-4103	N	A	[c]
Corcyra HI/HO	4005-3905	NE	A	[c]
Corinth HI/HO	3904-3805	NE	A	
GrkMrc LP 3-5	3814, 3622, 3623	NE	A	
Sparta HI/HO 1-2	3815-3818	N	D	[d]
Sparta HI/HO 3	3718-3619	NE	D	
Sparta HI/HO 4	3620-3621	N	D	

[a] Andromachus may only command Corinthian/Corcyra hoplites, and any peltast/skirmishers.

[b] Or use Auxiliary SK Archer 1 (red).

[c] Actually represents several smaller city-state contingents and more Corinthians (in the Corcyran unit).

[d] The Spartan formation is staggered since they have been following the road in column and have only just changed to battle formation.

#### Army Size and TQ Levels

Army	Size	TQ Points [a]	Rout Ratio	Quality Ratio
Persian	177	213	30%	1.20
Greek	136	168	35%	1.23

[a] This counts skirmisher units at their full TQ value, different RP value. Double-sized units are doubled for TQ value, to get more accurate reading of their worth.

[b] If the WE counters are not used, the Persian force drops by two in TQ and one in size. This does not significantly affect rout or quality, and is made up for in slightly improved missile capability.

#### BALANCE:

Battle favors the Persians if they can avoid an infantry clash with the Spartans and make good use of their cavalry. Players may wish to substitute Spartan Hoplite #7 for #3. Ultimately, a lot depends on which commander goes first, and most opposing commanders are of equal initiative on purpose just to introduce such uncertainty.

#### Battle of Cunaxa, Sept, 401 B.C.

Upon the death of Darius II, Artaxerxes II was confirmed as the next Achaemenid King of Kings of the Persian Empire. This did not sit well with his younger brother Cyrus, a dynamic young man who had won renown campaigning in Thrace and been appointed by Darius supreme commander of the maritime satrapies. Cyrus apparently tried to assassinate the new King in an aborted palace coup (with the support of their mother, Parysatis! Guess we know who her favorite was). Cyrus was spared by his brother (mainly due to

the entreaties of Parysatis) and sent back to Asia Minor. He immediately began recruiting an army, ostensibly to make war on the Pisidians. He secured a Greek mercenary force of some 10,000 hoplites and 3,000 light troops, mainly peltasts. Adding this to his satrapial army and other Persian forces that came over to him, he set out on a march from Sardis to the heart of the Empire, approaching Babylon before encountering any serious opposition from Artaxerxes, who had been busy gathering his army.

Although the expedition is described by the Greeks as a force of liberation to free the empire from a usurper, the campaign was simply a battle of royal succession. Artaxerxes had the more legitimate claim to the throne, and it is unlikely that a Persian King Cyrus II would have been any different from his brother. Certainly, the Greeks, many of whom were in exile from their cities, were only in it for the great amounts of pay promised by Cyrus on his assumption of the throne.

# Deluxe Alexander Scenarios: The Great Battles of History Series

## THE BATTLE OF CUNAXA, 401 BC

### Initial Deployment

#### Army of Cyrus the Younger Deployment - all units face South

Unit(s)	Hex(es)	Counter	Notes
Cyrus [OC] (use Craterus)	3018	A	
Ariaeus (WC) (use Antigones)	3134	D	
Clearchus (WC) (use Philotas)	3009	A	
Pharnaces	3026	A	
Arbelitis LC Archer	3136	D	
Sogdian LC	3135	A	
Prmsida LC	3134	A	
Auxiliary Archers 1-5	3132,3131,3027,3025,3019	D	
Auxiliary Slingers 1-2	3130, 3029	D	
Persia LI 1-2	3028, 3026	D	
Mercenary Peltast 1-5	3024,3023,3022,3021,3020	A	
Companion HC 1	3018	A	
Arachosia LC 1-2	3017, 3016	D	
Mercny Slinger 1	3015	A	
GrkMrc Peltast (Purple)	3014, 3012, 3001	A	
Cretan Archer	3013	A	
Sparta Hoplite 1-5 (Black)	3011-3002	D	[a]

[a] Although Spartan mercenaries were present, it would be more accurate to label these units 'Greek' as the mercenaries from all over Greece. Players wishing to show the mixed nature of the mercenary force may substitute Greek HI/HO 5-6 and Argos HI/HO 1, for Spartan HI/HO 3-5, though their colors are closer to those of Artaxerxes' forces. It is important to use TQ-7 units as several writers stress the cohesiveness of these hoplites as compared with 'Athenian citizen militia' (i.e., TQ-6).

#### Army of Artaxerxes II - all units face North

Unit(s)	Hex(es)	Counter	Notes
Artaxerxes II [OC] (use Darius III)	2220	A	
Tissaphemes (WC) (use Nabarzanes)	2205	A	
Orontas (WC) (use Omares)	2339	A	
Mithridates	2229	A	
Persia LC 1	2341	A	
Dahae LC Archer 1	2340	A	
Armenia LC 1	2339	A	
Susian Archer 1	2240, 2239	A	
Persian Javelin SK 1-2	2238, 2237	A	
GrkMrc Peltast 1-2	2236, 2235	A	
Uxian Slinger 1-2	2234, 2233	A	
Anatolian Levy LI Archer 1-2	2232, 2231	A	
Babylon LI Archer 1-2	2230, 2229	WE	[a]
Hyracanian Javelin LI	2228	WE	[b]
Carian LI 1-3	2227, 2226, 2225	A	
Sacaen MI 1-2	2224, 2223	WE	[c]
Immortal MI 1-3	2222, 2221, 2121	A	
Kinsmen HC 1	2220	A	
Carian LN 1	2219	A	
Asia Levy LI 1-8	2218,2217,2216,2215, 2214,2211,2210,2209	A	
Sitcenia Archer 1-2	2213, 2212	A	
Egypt LI Archer	2208	WE	[a]
Arabia Archer 1-2	2207, 2206	A	
Media HC 1	2205	A	
Mesopotamia LC 1	2204	A	
Cappadocia LC 1	2203	A	
Median Archer 1-2	2202, 2201	A	
Persian Chariots 1-5	2403,2405,2407,2409, 2411	A	

[a] Or use green Indian LI Archer units. [b] Or use green Indian LI Javelin unit. [c] Or use Tribal MI units.

#### Army Size and TQ Levels

Army	Size	TQ Points [a]	Rout Ratio	Quality Ratio
Cyrus	127	190	40%	1.50
Artaxerxes	189	232	40%	1.23 [b]

[a] This counts skirmisher and chariot units at their full TQ value, different from RP value. Double-sized units are doubled for TQ value, to get a more accurate reading of their worth.

[b] If the WE counters are not used, Artaxerxes force drops by two in TQ and one in size. This does not significantly affect rout or quality, and is made up for in slightly improved missile capability.

#### LINE COMMAND ELIGIBILITY:

The following comprise individual lines.  
 Hoplites, Greek (Purple) Peltasts, & Cretan Archer unit  
 Red colored Skirmisher, Light Infantry, & Peltasts  
 Blue colored Skirmisher, Light Inf., Peltasts & Med. Inf.  
 Chariots

#### RETREAT EDGE:

**Cyrus:**  
North edge of map.  
**Artaxerxes:**  
South edge of map.

#### VICTORY CONDITIONS:

Cyrus' Army withdraws when it has accumulated 68 rout points. Artaxerxes' Army withdraws when it has accumulated 72 rout points. If both armies rout at the same time the game is a draw. If either OC is killed, the other side immediately wins on completion of the current turn. If both are killed in the same turn, both sides lose.

#### BALANCE:

Slightly favors Artaxerxes. Players may wish to treat Cyrus' bodyguard cavalry (Companion HC 1) at cataphracted (do not use the optional Cavalry Charge Formations [9.7]) and/or use the Rout Point bid method.

The forces met near the village of Cunaxa, on the east bank of the Euphrates River, only a few miles from Babylon. According to Xenophon, Artaxerxes had 900,000 men and Cyrus 100,000 men in addition to the Greek mercenaries. This typical inflation of Persian numbers has been reduced to 30,000 foot, 6,000 cavalry for Artaxerxes and about 12,000 foot, 2,600 cavalry for Cyrus plus the 13,000 Greeks. Artaxerxes also had a large number of scythed chariots with which he hoped to counter the weight of the hoplite phalanx.

Cyrus' army had the Greeks on the right, flanked by the Euphrates. Next to them were some skirmishers and about a thousand Paphlagonian cavalry. Cyrus with his bodyguard of 600 heavy (several sources say cataphracted) cavalry was in the center. Little is known of the composition of the left wing, under Ariaeus.

Opposite the Greeks, Artaxerxes posted the highly capable Tissaphernes (Satrap of Lydia) with his cavalry flanked by light infantry, some supposedly from Egypt even though Egypt was currently in revolt

from Persia. This line was behind the scythed chariots. Artaxerxes was in the center with his cavalry guard, and Orontas, the Satrap of Armenia, commanded on the right.

The battle led off with a futile chariot charge against the Greeks, followed by Tissaphernes' cavalry, who apparently passed through the Greek peltasts with few casualties on each side, and went on to plunder the Greek camp. The Greeks then advanced and easily routed the enemy's left wing infantry. Clearchus apparently refused an

# Battles of the Achaemenidae: Plataea and Cunaxa

order from Cyrus to turn and march on the enemy center as he was afraid to pull his flank away from the river and open the Greeks to a possible encirclement.

In the center the two forces clashed. Cyrus supposedly killed the commander of Artaxerxes' guard, then wounded and unhorsed the King. Artaxerxes was hurried away by his guards. At his moment of triumph, Cyrus was struck in the temple and toppled from his horse. The Persians then cut off his head and hand. It is unknown who actually killed him (several claimed to), and whether the weapon was a javelin, dart, or a well thrown (or slung) rock.

With the death of Cyrus, the Persian contingent of the army broke and ran. The left wing under Ariaeus was in imminent danger of being flanked anyway. The victorious but shaken Persians withdrew as well to lick their wounds, and the Greeks returned to their plundered camp. Ironically, the Greeks did not even know Cyrus was dead until the next day and they assumed that the battle had been won.

## Aftermath

The Greeks negotiated for a withdrawal home, but during a meeting with Tissaphernes, the *five Generals and twenty Captains* were seized and eventually executed with the exception of Menon. The Persians reasoned that the hoplites would disintegrate without leadership. However, the Greeks simply elected new officers, one of whom was Xenophon. There is insufficient room here to detail the *March of the ten thousand* a thousand miles up the Tigris and through the mountains under constant harassment by Persians and local tribes. Suffice it to say that it reinforced the Greek belief in their superiority over Asian troops, and made Xenophon a popular hero.

Ariaeus wasted no time declaring his loyalty to Artaxerxes and was assigned to help Tissaphernes attempt to wipe out his former Greek allies.



The two men who claimed to have killed Cyrus, as well as the eunuch who cut off his head and hand, were all dealt with by a vengeful Parysatis. The wonderful Queen-mother instigated to have them variously racked, flayed alive, killed by exposure, have their eyes torn out, and/or have molten bronze poured in their ears. It was definitely dangerous to kill even a rebel Prince.

Artaxerxes soon had to deal with another Greek invasion, under Agesilaus of Sparta, who did very well in Asia Minor against his satraps. Artaxerxes found a better way to defeat these invaders. He spent 30,000 darics to have the other Greek cities revolt against Spartan hegemony, forcing the recall of Agesilaus and his army. Artaxerxes soon regained dominion over the Asian Greek cities with the Peace of Antalcidas. The Great King ruled until 359 BC, eventually dying at the age of 94.

## Map

Use the Gaugamela map. The 42xx hex row is the North edge. West edge is the Euphrates River.

## Counters

Cyrus uses red counters from **Alex Deluxe** and **Diadochoi**, with the exception of three purple peltast counters, and the hoplite units. Artaxerxes uses blue counters from **Alex Deluxe** and **Diadochoi**, in addition to several Persian counters from the SPQR module **War Elephant**. Substitutes are provided for players without that module.

## Special Rules

- 1) In the first turn (only), Artaxerxes gets a modified elite initiative phase in which he may only issue a line command to the chariots, despite the range.
- 2) Cyrus' units may use Pass through avoidance (9.24).
- 3) If green Indian units are used, 'slippage' is not in effect, but other rules pertaining to Indian archers are.
- 4) Spartan hoplites may not use the Spartan Withdrawal and Spartan Reverse Move Charge rules from the Chaeronea scenario.
- 5) All commanders have line command capability even if not on their counter. Pharnaces has a strategy rating of 'I'.
- 6) If Clearchus is killed, the Cyran player may place Proxenus (use Eudamus) in any hex occupied by a Greek unit after the conclusion of the Withdrawal Phase of the turn in which Clearchus is killed. Why? Mainly since the Greek mercenaries were not a single homogeneous unit. Clearchus technically commanded only his particular contingent. Proxenus and Menon commanded the other sections. Only one commander is used for game purposes. This rule simulates that the death of one commander would not leave the entire Greek force leaderless.

## Sources

Herodotus, *The Histories*; Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition*; Plutarch, *Life of Artaxerxes*; Hans Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity*; John Warry, *Warfare in the Classical World*.