

WAR & CONQUEST

MITHRIDATIC PONTIC

100BC – 46 BC

The following Army Organisation List (AOL) will enable you to build a Mithridatic Pontic army for War & Conquest.

Please refer to the introductory online Army Organisation List guide document. This is Version 3, April 2020. Feedback and observations are most welcome.

Thanks to John O'Connor for creating the original list.

The Kingdom of Pontus, located in the north of Asia Minor on the southern shores of the Black Sea, was one of Rome's most persistent enemies. Pontus ruled over a large and wealthy area including most of the Black Sea coast, the Crimean Bosphorus, Cappadocia and parts of Armenia. Due to this her armies contained an eclectic mix of troops from all of the nations in the area and large numbers of mercenaries.

Her armies defeated Roman armies several times during the Mithridatic Wars but, unfortunately, only defeats at 2nd Chaeronea, Orchomenus and Zela (Veni, Vidi, Vici) are written about in most general histories – that's if the Mithridatic Wars get a mention at all. Pontus was also responsible for the only recorded successful use of scythed chariots at the River Amnias against the Bithynians.

ARMY COMPOSITION

PERSONALITIES OF WAR

Up to 25% of the points value of the army may be Personalities of War
An Army General must be selected.
Strategy Intervention Points are automatically pooled in a Pontic army except from allied commanders

CAVALRY

Up to 50% of the points value of the army may be cavalry.

INFANTRY

At least 25% of the points value of the army must be infantry

SUPPORTING FORMATIONS

Up to 50% of the points value of the army may be selected from supporting formations

ALLIED FORMATIONS

Up to 25% of the points value of the army may be selected from allied formations

LEGENDS OF WAR

Assuming they are being used, an additional 25% of the points value of the army may be taken as Legends of War. Alternatively you can increase the size of your army with extra formations.

PERSONALITIES OF WAR

0-1 MITHRIDATES EUPATOR

Mo	L	S	Abilities	SIPS	ZOC	Pts
9	3	2	Army General	2	20"	200

Equipment: As unit
Armour Value: As unit
Formation: Personality
 Mounted with an Armour Value of 3

Special: If Mithridates is fielded the Noble cavalry unit become compulsory

Mithridates promoted himself as Alexander reborn to his Hellenised subjects and as an heir to the Achaemenids to his Asiatic subjects so using a miniature of Alexander to represent him is entirely appropriate! The large zone of command is due to his inspiring presence

GENERAL

Mo	L	S	Abilities	SIPS	ZOC	Pts
9	2	2	Army General	2	10"	155

Equipment: As unit
Armour Value: As unit
Options: May add 1 additional Strategy Intervention Point for 20 points
Formation: Personality
 May move independently with an Armour Value of 2
 May be mounted for 10 points with an Armour Value of 3

Special: May act as the Army General if Mithridates is not in the army or is killed during the battle.

OFFICER

Mo	L	S	Abilities	SIPS	ZOC	Pts
8	1	2	-	-	10"	80

Equipment: As unit
Armour Value: As unit
Options: May add 1 additional Strategy Intervention Point for 20 points

Formation: Personality
 May move independently with an Armour Value of 2
 May be mounted for 10 points with an Armour Value of 3

Many of the Pontic generals were mercenaries rather than natives of Pontus. Here are some names to use for your generals – Archelaus, Neoptolemus, Tiridates, Arcathius, Dorylaeus.

CAVALRY FORMATIONS

After the Pontic conquest of the Crimean Bosphorus, Sarmatians and Scythians became commonplace so are treated as regular members of the army rather than mercenaries or subjects.

HEAVY CAVALRY

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
4	3	3	7	4	Regular	-	20

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, thrusting spear, javelins, heavy armour and shield

This troop type represents the standard heavy cavalry used during this period. It not only includes Pontic cavalry but Galatians, Greeks or any others that may have fought in this fashion.

0-1 NOBLE CAVALRY

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
4	3	3	8	4	Regular	Wedge Bonus 1	23

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, thrusting spear, javelins, heavy armour and shield

Options: May take half barding at 1 point per model.

Pontus was located next to Cappadocia and Armenia both of which featured barded cavalry especially amongst the nobility. It is reasonable to assume at least some used barding.

0-1 SCYTHIAN HORSE ARCHERS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	1	Light	Nomad Cavalry Feign Flight	20

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, thrusting spear and bow

Special: May Skirmish

Options: May take buckler at 1 point per model.

May have Wedge Bonus of 1 for 2 points per model

Scythian horse archers were rightly feared and highly regarded as mercenaries in the classical world.

CAPPADOCIAN LIGHT CAVALRY

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	6	2	Light	-	14

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, javelins and shield

Special: May Skirmish

May also represent any other light cavalry type that fought in this fashion.

0-1 SARMATIANS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
4	3	3	8	3	Regular	Nomad Cavalry	24

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, kontos and heavy armour

Options: May add cloth barding at 2 points per model.
May add short bow at 1 point per model

The basic troop type represented here is the Black Sea Sarmatians that formed much of the nobility in the Crimean. They appear to have fought with only the kontos and no barding. Other Sarmatians still used bows but were more inclined to charge without any shooting hence the rating as short bow. Cloth barding is a compromise between half metal/horn and full leather/felt barding that appears to have been used.

0-1 RHOXOLANII

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
4	3	3	8	2	Regular	Nomad Cavalry	23

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, thrusting spear, short bow, light armour and shield

Rhoxolanii are a Sarmatian people that still fought in an archaic fashion similar to the Scythians.

INFANTRY FORMATIONS

Pike armed troops or imitation legio cannot outnumber thureophoroi or thorakitai by more than 2 to 1. This was not a true Successor army with a strong phalanx. Much of the infantry component was mercenary infantry of various types and subject infantry of questionable quality. Some armies featured no phalangites or legio at all.

0-1 BRAZEN SHIELDS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	8	2	Regular	Trained Phalanx	17

Equipment: Hand weapon, pike, light armour and shield.

Options: May upgrade to heavy armour at 1 point per model

Brazen Shields are described as an elite unit but combat performance does not bear this out. They were apparently well equipped hence the option for heavy armour. Most "elite" units have a high opinion of themselves and this usually translates into a better than usual morale so I have given them the benefit of the doubt and given them morale 8 to reflect this.

PHALANGITES

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	2	Regular	Trained Phalanx	14

Equipment: Hand weapon, pike, light armour and shield

This profile can be used to represent both mercenaries and other phalangites provided by subject states. Pantadapoi models may be appropriate.

SLAVE PHALANX

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
2	2	3	5	1	Regular	Phalanx	8

Equipment: Hand weapon, pike and shield.

Options: May take Extra Armour at 20 points per unit.

After the Italian Vespers (80000 Roman and Italian merchants as well as their families slaughtered on one day) Mithridates released their slaves offering them the opportunity to strike back at their former masters. Many took up the challenge and were formed into a phalanx or fought in their native styles. The slave phalanx gave a good account of itself at 2nd Chaeronea and was probably destroyed at Orchomenus.

THUREOPHOROI

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	1	Regular	-	11

Equipment: Hand weapon, thrusting spear, shield and javelins

Options: One unit may take light armour at 1 point per model making them Thorakitai.

Special: Light or Regular. All Thureophoroi must be fielded using the same formation type.

Thureophoroi formed a large part of the Pontic infantry forces as well as being the most common mercenary infantry of this period. There is some debate as to whether they were loose formation or close combat troops. I have provided the option for either but only one type may be fielded in the same army. Thorakitai may not have been common at this time but given the wealth that Pontus had and their propensity for finery (Mithridates told his men to tone down their appearance as they looked too rich) I have allowed that option. Some city militia may have issued their men mail as well so this option could be used to represent them as well. Most of the troops supplied by the Greek cities allied to Pontus would have been Thureophoroi.

IMITATION LEGIO

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	2	Regular	-	10

Equipment: Hand weapon, throwing spear, light armour and shield

Options: May upgrade to heavy armour at 1 point per model.

May upgrade to heavy throwing spears at 1 point per model.

May upgrade to large shield at 1 point per model.

Special: One unit maximum if any pike armed units fielded

There is some debate about how well trained and equipped these troops were. I lean towards them being closer to thureophoroi with throwing spears and armour. Armour was probably linen as that was readily available but may have been mail so I have allowed the option of heavy armour. Whether they utilised pila or scuta is also debateable but those options are also available. Utilise the options in any way you see fit including having different units armed differently within the same army so long as your opponent is made aware or it is obvious from the appearance of the models.

SUPPORTING FORMATIONS

0-3 SCYTHED CHARIOT

KA	Mo	AV	D	Lives	Pts
4	8	4	2	8	69

Equipment: One charioteer riding in a four horse chariot

Special: Armour Penetration 2
Refer to page 144 of the War & Conquest rulebook for details

GALATIANS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	1	Regular	Warband Undisciplined Unmotivated	9

Equipment: Hand weapon, throwing spear and shield

These troops are subject Galatians, not the ferocious mercenaries of earlier times. They had already had the stuffing beaten out of them by the Romans and then subjugated by Mithridates. The Galatians reputedly hated Mithridates hence the unmotivated rating.

CAPPADOCIAN JAVELINMEN OR SIMILAR

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	6	1	Light	-	8

Equipment: Hand weapon, javelins and shield.

SKIRMISH INFANTRY

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
2	3	2	5	-	Skirmish	-I	4

Equipment: Javelins.

Options: May have a buckler at 1 point per model.
Up to one unit may exchange javelins for slings at no additional points cost.
Any unit may exchange javelins for short bows at no cost.
Shortbow armed units may not take a buckler.

ARCHERS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
2	3	3	6	-	Light	-	6

Equipment: Hand weapon, short bow.

Massed archers were a feature of Pontic armies but whether these were simply a closer than normal formation of skirmishing archers or dedicated loose formation archer unit is debateable. I lean towards massed skirmishers as the most likely option though many players will have archers based for closer work so have included the option.

0 -1 BASTARNAE

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	8	-	Light	Warband Undisciplined Fanatical	13

Equipment: Falx (count as halberd) and hand weapon.

Options: May have javelins at 1 point per model.

May have shields at 1 point per model.

Bastarnae were a tribe that appear in fairly large number in later Dacian armies. They were ferocious warriors armed with the dreaded falx and little else.

0 -1 THRACIAN PELTASTS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	1	Light	-	11

Equipment: Hand weapon, rhomphaia (treat as halberd), shield and javelins

By this period Thracian mercenaries were equipped similarly to thureophoroi with the addition of rhomphaia.

0- 1 CHALYBES

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	2	Light	-	10

Equipment: Hand weapon, long thrusting spear

Chalybes, Iberi, Albani – the troops armed with long spears from the eastern shores of the Black Sea that served in the Pontic armies have been referred to by all of these names in various wargames rules over the years. They were even called Spanish by one army list writer who misinterpreted the Iberi name. Regardless they make for an interesting, if tactically questionable, addition to the army.

ALLIED FORMATIONS

ARMENIAN COMMANDER

Mo	L	S	Abilities	SIPS	ZOC	Pts
8	2	2	-	1	10"	100

Equipment: As unit

Armour Value: As unit

Options: May add 1 additional Strategy Intervention Point for 20 points

Formation: Personality

May move independently with an Armour Value of 2

May be mounted for 10 points with an Armour Value of 3

Special: His Strategy Intervention Points may only be used on Armenian troops

0-1 ARMENIAN CATAPHRACTS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
3	3	3	7	4	Regular	Combat Rank Bonus	33

Equipment: Horse, hand weapon, kontos, cataphract armour and metal barding (which gives a Durability of 8)

Special: May count a Rank Bonus of up to 2 towards the Combat result

Armenian cataphracts were of dubious quality and were soundly beaten by the Romans at Tigranocerta

1+ ARMENIAN HORSE ARCHERS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
2	3	3	6	1	Skirmish	Feign Flight	14

Equipment: Horse, short bow, hand weapon.

ARMENIAN SKIRMISHERS

CA	SA	KA	Mo	AV	Formation	Abilities	Pts
2	3	2	5	-	Skirmish	-	4

Equipment: Javelins.

Options: May take bucklers at 1 point per model.

May exchange javelins for short bow at no cost.

Short bow armed units may not take a buckler

LEGENDS OF WAR

None at this time

PIKES (page 121)

Add the following text

When fighting against infantry armed with a thrusting spear or long thrusting spear, pike armed troops may re-roll their 'hit rolls' when attempting to strike the target, in the opening round of any combat. Should you choose to do this, you must reroll all the hit rolls, not just the misses.

This only applies when fighting the weapons noted above, as they would be in a denser formation than those armed with throwing spears or pilum. The rule is there to represent the 'weapons reach' war that escalated in Feudal Japan and elsewhere and is already included in the Long Thrusting Spears rules on page 120 although they only gain the benefit against Thrusting Spears

FEATURE RULES

THE WEDGE FORMATION

It is considered that some cavalry formations fought in a wedge formation. Of course this could be as simple as the man in the middle of the front rank leading the way. For now, rather than create a special wedge formation rule, the following rules apply to units with the wedge special rule, there is no special formation required.

The unit benefits from the Shock Charge rule. The bonus is indicated as such: Wedge Bonus 1 or 2, depending on the troop type. This is in addition to any applicable Impact bonus.

UNMOTIVATED

This rule is used to represent some of the more poorly motivated 'levy' formations. Strategy Intervention Points cannot be used on unmotivated troops unless a Personality who can use them is in the unit.

EXTRA ARMOUR

It was not uncommon for some members of a formation to be well armoured in comparison to others, who may have little, or even no armour. Although we assume this was found in Warband style armies and hastily levied troops from the Dark Ages, it is also a good way to provide an Armour benefit to Combined Formations and other formations where only part of the unit may have been well armoured.

A formation with Extra Armour gains a +1 Armour Value while over half strength. Once it drops to half strength or less then the bonus is lost.

To represent the formation on the tabletop, ensure some of the front rank models are equipped with armour or use some extra shields at the back of the unit to remind yourself and your opponent.

Pontic armies are colourful and varied if unpredictable. Like most "kitchen sink" armies they have something for every occasion but not enough of anything to be decisive. They can be a challenging army to command but for sheer variety it is hard to go past a Pontic army. They can also morph into several other armies such as Successors, Seleucids, Bosphorans, Sarmatians, Dacians, Galatians and more.



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