

Battle of Arbedo (1422)

briefing game-master

This scenario is based on the battle of Arbedo that took place on June 30 in 1422. It pitted an Italian condottieri army against the Swiss who at that time had already asserted their independence against the Hapsburgs, but had, as of yet unknown to them and the world, the Burgundian wars against Charles the Bold still ahead of them.

Prelude

The small village of Arbedo is just a few kilometers to the north of the stronghold Bellinzona. In 1419 two Swiss cantons had bought this from the Sacco Barons. However they weren't able to do much with it and in 1422 the Visconti's of Milan proposed to buy it. The Swiss rejected. Not taking no for an answer the Visconti's send a condottieri army under the Count of Carmagnola to take possession of Bellinzona. This he did and the Swiss soon reacted by sending an army to reconquer it.

Situation report

The scenario starts with the Milanese army deploying. Their Avant-gare command is halfway its deployment, the Batteile is entering the table behind it.

The Swiss are entering from the northern table edge as a single large command with the units close, but not linked, to each other.

Unknown to the Milanese many Swiss are out foraging. The Swiss know these men are somewhere, but have no idea how far they have ventured, how to send word to them or when to expect them back. These men may enter the battle from the northern table edge as a single unit at any moment deemed suitable to the game-master. Historically these foragers came into sight when the Swiss army was about to break, after having fended off many charges and showers of crossbow arrows.

The Swiss are also expecting reinforcements by other cantons. However, unknown to the Swiss, these are too far out and will not materialize.

The Italian Elmeti are allowed to dismount, but must start the battle mounted. Only suggest this to the Italian player, if at all, after at least one mounted charge has been made.

The Swiss use the keywords DETERMINED and GEWALTHUT. Although most were still armed with halberds these still gave them good staying power, but not to the extent of a fully pike-armed unit, against the charges by mounted Elmeti. Once the latter dismounted the Swiss halberds were outreached by the lances used as spears. Still, it was a slogging match with the Swiss being in turn showered with crossbow arrows and then fighting hand to hand with heavily armored Elmeti, being showered again, etc. until

slowly but surely casualties are starting to mount, thus lessening the effect of their numbers and the keyword GEWALTHUT, but not the keyword DETERMINED.

Unknown to the Swiss, the keyword MERCENARY does not have much effect in this battle. The Italians have just taken Bellinzona, outnumber the Swiss and so are confident of success... good pay and loot of which none of them wants to be left out.

Victory conditions

See briefing Swiss and Italian army.

Army

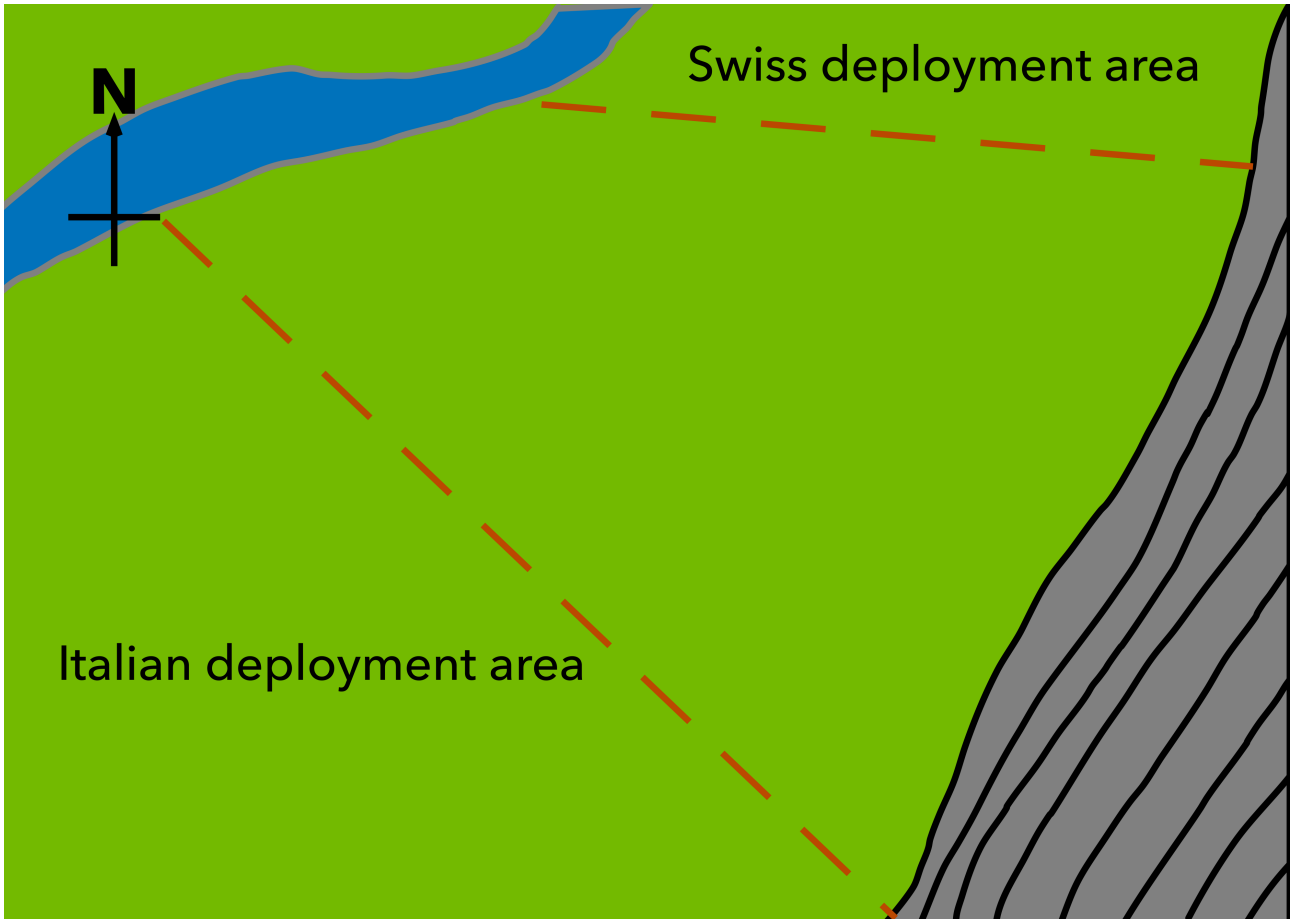
Swiss foragers

Commander: NA
Command dice: NA
Special rules: none

Unit	Size (men)	WEAPON	KEYWORDS
Swiss infantry	800	Mostly halberds and a few pikes	DETERMINED GEWALTHUT CLOSE ORDER

Battlefield

The river is unfordable and the mountain slopes too steep to be of any use. The rest are flat open fields.



N.B. de Tabletop is 50 x 70 cm. We spelen meet 1 cm = 50 paces.

Today the battlefield is located in the Swiss canton of Ticino and hemmed in between the Alpine foothills of southern Switzerland. To the south is Bellinzona, to the north the valley splits towards the north and east.

