Wargame Rules Sagrajas 1086
The Almoravids defeat Alfonso VI

1. Components

Map
The map shows the area just in front of the Muslim camp, on the outskirts of Badajoz, between the slopes near the Cerro de Santa Engracia and the right bank of the Gévora River. Each hexagon represents approximately 50 meters of terrain.

The Units
There are two types of units: infantry and cavalry. Each unit includes a numerical combat rating and an alphabetical quality indicator.

Some units may include an icon to represent a certain special ability. All units have two sides. The side with the gray stripe indicates that they are disorganized. (See *figure 1*)

Each infantry unit represents roughly 250 men. The cavalry units represent about 100 riders.

The units always face one of the edges of the hexagon they occupy with their position determining the two frontal hexes, the flanks and the two rear hexes. (See *figure 2*)

Leaders
Leaders are not considered units. Although they can move on their own, they cannot attack on their own. They only offer modifiers to the accompanying unit and adjacent units. (See *figure 1*)

Markers
There are two types of game markers, Javelins and Routs, which are placed on a unit under certain conditions. (See *figure 3*)

Other types of tokens include the turn counter and morale markers that are used on the corresponding squares on the board, off the map. (See *figure 3*)

2. Sequence of play

In each game turn both players participate. First the Christian and then the
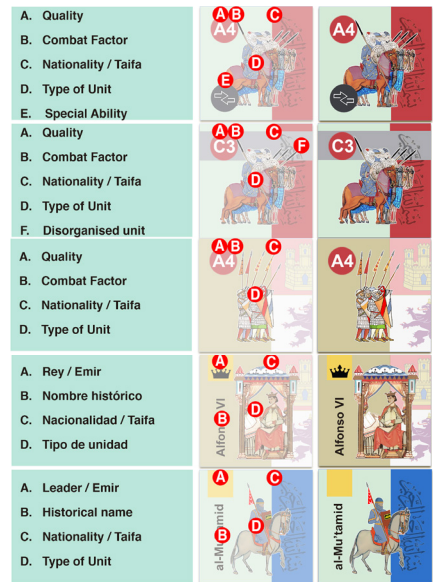

A.	Quality
B.	Combat Factor
C.	Nationality / Taifa
D.	Type of Unit
E.	Special Ability

A.	Quality
B.	Combat Factor
C.	Nationality / Taifa
D.	Type of Unit
F.	Disorganised unit

A.	Quality
B.	Combat Factor
C.	Nationality / Taifa
D.	Type of Unit

A.	Rey / Emir
B.	Nombre histórico
C.	Nacionalidad / Taifa
D.	Tipo de unidad

A.	Leader / Emir
B.	Historical name
C.	Nationality / Taifa
D.	Type of Unit

Figure 1

Figure 2

Units

Muslim infantry   Christian infantry

Muslim cavalry   Christian cavalry

Taifa unit nationalities

AlmoravidB   adajoz   Granada   Seville

Special abilities of units

Javelin   TornafuyeA   rchersC   harge

Leaders

Muslim   Christian

Figure 1

MARKERS

Javelins   Routing

Muslim Morale

Infantry   Cavalry

Cavalry and infantry

Christian Morale

Turn

Infantry   Cavalry
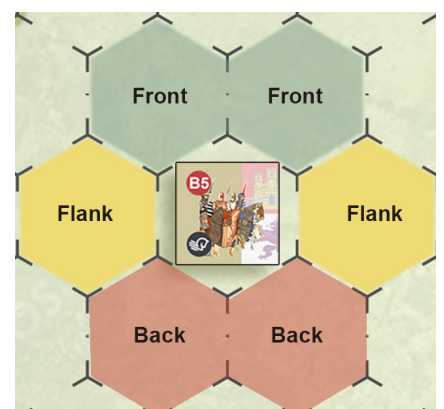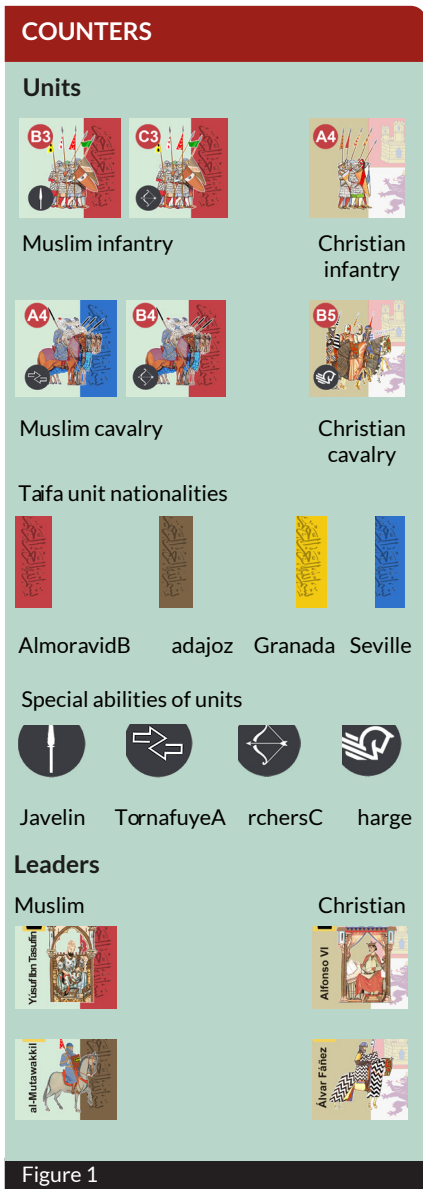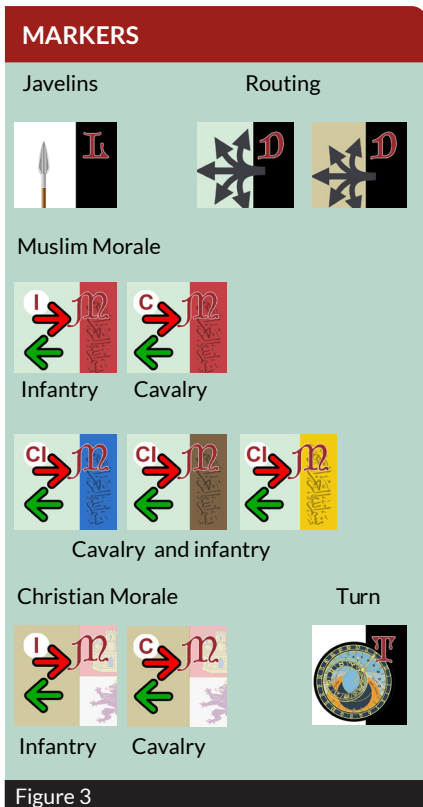
Figure 3

Muslim. They each complete their own sequence before moving on to the next player.

1. Movement
1.1 Cavalry: special attack
2. Defensive shooting
3. Offensive shooting
4. Combat
5. Rallying

When the Muslim player ends his rally phase, the turn counter advances one position.

3. Movement

All units and leaders have 3 basic movement points (MP), so they can move up to three hexes from their starting position.

This movement can be affected by terrain and the proximity of enemy units.

A unit can only move into one of its two front hexes. At the end of its movement, a unit can change its facing towards any of the corners of the hex it occupies.

If a unit leaves the map it will be considered eliminated. (See exception **10.2.**)

Cavalry when charging has 4 MP. Routed units have 4 MP. (See point **7.2.**)

Stacking
There can be several pieces sharing a hex (e.g. unit, leader and rout marker) but only one of them can be a unit.

Units may not stack at any time, even temporarily during movement.

Terrain
The different types of terrain on the board are plain, forest, fortification, river, and swamp. The three shades of flat terrain (flat, flat height 1, flat height 2) indicate different heights, the higher the darker. Height changes are indicated by a slope (a thick line between two hexagons). (See **figure 4**)

Going up a slope requires the expenditure of an additional movement point.

Entering a hex of mud ends movement and disrupts the unit. The river is impassable.

In addition to affecting movement, terrain can also add a modifier to combat rolls. (See **Terrain Effects Table** next to the plan)

Zone of Control
If a unit, during its movement, enters either of the two front hexes of an enemy unit, it stops its movement.

If a unit begins its movement in one of the two front hexes of an enemy unit it may move a maximum of one hex, regardless of facing, as long as it does not re-enter the front of an enemy unit.

3.1. Charging
Cavalry units with the charge icon can make an attack during their movement as follows:

• The charging unit cannot start its movement adjacent to an enemy unit.

• You have up to 4 movement points to contact the enemy unit.

• In each step you must always move towards one of its two frontal hexagons. You cannot change the facing.

• It has to end its movement adjacent to an enemy unit.

• At that time, he makes an attack using the close combat table with a +2 modifier to the roll in addition to any other applicable modifiers.

• After the charge the cavalry unit is disorganised.

> **Note.** *The heavy cavalry charge was the main advantage that the Christian forces had, but to carry this out they needed to start a certain distance away from the enemy unit. For that reason it cannot start next to an enemy unit. It needs to travel a certain distance on a previous route. The bonus tries to reflect this superiority.*

3.2. Tornafuye
* See translator note at the end of Designer's notes.

Cavalry units with the tornafuye icon can perform an attack during their movement as follows:

• Indicate which enemy unit they are going to attack.

• Cavalry cannot start their movement adjacent to any enemy units.

• It has 3 movement points during which it can change facing and move in any direction.

• During that movement it cannot be adjacent to an enemy unit.

• As soon as he is two hexes away from the indicated enemy (it could be at the beginning of the movement), he makes an attack roll on the corresponding table and applies the result.

3.3. Shoot and run

Cavalry units with the archers icon can perform an attack during their movement as follows:

• Indicate which enemy unit it is going to attack.

• Cavalry cannot start their movement adjacent to an enemy unit.

• It has 3 movement points during which it can change facing and move in any direction.

• During that movement it cannot be adjacent to an enemy unit.

• As soon as he is two hexes away from the indicated enemy (it could be at the beginning of the movement), he makes an attack roll on the corresponding table and applies the result.

Note. The Muslim cavalry was light and used these two tactics to weaken and disorganize the opponent.

4. Shooting

Units with the ability to shoot, only those with the archery icon, that have not attacked in the previous segment can now do so, first those of the defender and then those of the attacker, using the corresponding table.

Note. In the battle of Sagrajas, only the Muslim units have this capacity, so the Christian ones would not actually act in this segment.

If at any time a unit with the ability to fire is disorganised or routed, it cannot rally and therefore will not be able to fire any more throughout the game.

Javelin units (there are three with that icon) act like a normal infantry unit although they can shoot during the game. That is why markers are included that are used to indicate that they have fired during that turn and that they are removed from the game once used.

The tables indicate the shooting distance for the different units: 2 is the distance for archers, both on horseback and on foot, and 1 is the distance for javelins. A distance of 1 hex is a shot at an adjacent unit. A range of 2 is a shot at a unit that is two hexes away, not counting that of the source unit. You cannot fire through hexes occupied by another unit.

5. Combat

The active player's units that have not attacked during movement or fired during the previous phase can now make a melee attack against a single enemy unit that is in either of their two front hexes.

Combat is resolved by rolling 1d8 and consulting the combat table. The result of the roll must be modified in the following way before obtaining the combat result:

• The initial modifier of the roll is obtained by subtracting the combat factor of the attacker and the defender.

• The secondary modifier depends on the comparison of the quality factors A, B or C. (See table of modifiers in the game map)

• Other modifiers are then applied like slope, leader, flank, or rear as they appear next to the attack table.

In the same close combat table, the possible effects after the combat are applied: unit eliminated, routing or disorganized.

If a unit is **eliminated** in combat it is removed from play and counts towards casualties, victory points. It also reduces the morale of the contingent and forces a morale roll on adjacent friendly units. The attacker can move into the hex the defender was occupying.

If a unit **routs** it faces towards its side of the board, receives a rout marker, and retreats one hex. The attacker must occupy the hex vacated by the defending unit.

If a unit becomes **disorganised**, its token is flipped to the side with the gray stripe. His stats are reduced and he loses any special abilities he had. A disorganised unit that after another attack received another disorganised result remains disorganised.

5.1. Retreat

The moment a unit receives the Rout marker, as a result of combat or a morale die roll, the unit must face its owner's side of the board and retreat one hex.

This retreat movement must be made towards one of its two frontal hexes (remember that its facing has changed to face its own side). If these hexes are occupied by a friendly unit that friendly must retreat one hex back without changing its facing. If this friendly unit cannot retreat the Routing unit is eliminated. This elimination does not cause a new morale roll.

5.2. Advance after combat

The attacking unit can occupy the defender's hex after a combat in which the defender has been eliminated.

Claves de terreno / Terrain key

- Llano / Plain
- Llano altura 1 / *Clear level 1*
- Llano altura 2 / *Clear level 2*
- Pendiente / *Slope*
- Río / *River*
- Cenagal / *Swamp*
- Bosque / *Forest*
- Fortificación / *Fortification*
- Fortificación débil / *Weak fortification*
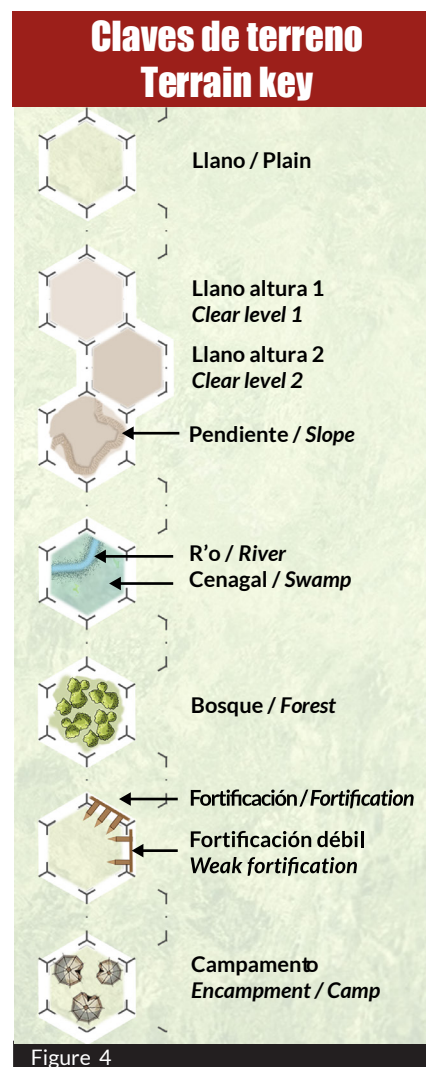- Campamento / *Encampment / Camp*

Figure 4

The attacking unit must occupy the defender's hex after a combat in which the defender has been routed.

The attacker must maintain the facing, it cannot change it after this advance.

The defender never advances after combat.

6. Morale

On the sheet included with the game map, players will find the **Morale Table** that records the status of each contingent. There is one marker for each Muslim taifa: Granada, Seville and Badajoz. The Christians and Almoravids have two markers: one for cavalry (white circle with the letter C) and infantry (letter I).

At the beginning of the game each of the markers is placed as indicated in the table.

Each time one of the contingents loses a unit or a leader, the indicator for its group drops one position.

If the unit has been eliminated in combat (both in attack and defense), all adjacent

MORALE TABLE

Type / Nationality	Initial Morale
Christian cavalry	12
Christian infantry	9
Almoravid cavalry	10
Almoravid infantry	9
Taifa of Seville	8
Taifa of Badajoz	8
Taifa of Granada	7

friendly units, one by one, make a morale roll with 1d6. If the result is greater than or equal to its current morale level, the unit is routed.

7. Cohesión

7.1. Disorganization
All units have two sides, one to represent the organized side with which they start the battle and another, with a gray stripe, for the disorganized state due to their interactions in the battle.

Disorganized units lose their special abilities although they can recover them if they manage to reorganize.

7.2. Routing
Routing units, those that have received a Rout marker as a result of a combat or morale roll, have their movement allowance increased to 4MP and are forced to move during their turn to their owner's side of the board. If they leave the map they are considered eliminated for all purposes (victory points and morale).

Routed units cannot initiate combat but can be attacked. Their characteristics are considered C2 in this case. They are only affected by an elimination result. Any other result keeps them in rout.

7.2.1. Movement of Routed Units
Routing units must move to their side of the board during their owner's movement phase (4PM). They are the first to move.

During that movement they may run into friendly units which they force to move as described in 5.1. If this friendly unit cannot retreat the Routed unit is eliminated. If the routed unit leaves the board it is eliminated.

8. Rally

During the Rally phase disorganised (*except those with the archery ability*) and routed units may attempt to improve their status under certain conditions. (See **Rally Table** on the help sheet).

Disorganised units (*except those with the archery ability*) may make a Rally roll as

long as they are not in one of the two frontal hexes of an enemy unit.

A leader on or adjacent to the unit grants a +1 die roll bonus.

Routed units may make a Rally roll as long as they are not in one of the two frontal hexes of an enemy unit and there is a leader on or adjacent to the unit.

Both rolls are made with 1d8 and are considered successful on a result of 7 or more. Disorganised units are restored to normal status and Routed units become Disorganised and may change their facing.

There can only be a single die roll per unit in each rally phase. Routed units that become Disorganised units cannot re-roll to Rally until their next turn.

9. Leaders

Leaders are not considered units because they cannot initiate an attack, but they can move on their own (3 MP) and stack with other units.

When accompanying another unit, they move with it, using the unit's movement points. (On the charge or rout, for example).

Leaders accompanying or adjacent to a unit of their nationality offer bonuses to various die rolls in the game.

The leader may only offer his modifiers to units of his nationality or contingent.

> *Note. In other similar games there is the concept of area of influence or command area for leaders. In this game it could be said that the influence distance is 1 but there is no command distance. Units are not required to be within a certain distance of the leader to receive orders. Because of the simplicity of tactics, all units can be activated on their turn.*

In the battle of Sagrajas:
• Alfonso VI and Álvar Fáñez are leaders of the Christian units.

• Yusuf is leader of all Muslim units.

• Al-Mu'tamid is leader only of the Seville taifa units.

• Al-Mut'wakkil is leader of Badajoz taifa units only.

Units over which Yusuf or Alfonso cannot rout. If for any reason they should rout, they are disorganised instead.

Each time the unit a leader is on engages in combat a die roll must be made to see if the leader is killed. Roll 1d6 and **on a result of 1 the leader dies**.

If an enemy unit enters a hex with a leader alone, the leader is automatically eliminated.

If either Alfonso or Yusuf is killed, the game immediately ends in victory for the opposing side. If both Yusuf and Alfonso perish in the same combat, the game ends in a draw.

10. Special rules

10.1. Christian Reinforcements
The Christian player receives 4 infantry units as reinforcements during the game. Reinforcements arrive on **turn 8**.

At the start of the Christian movement phase they are placed on the map in any of the boxes between 1401 and 2801. Units may then move normally during that phase.

Christian reinforcements may arrive before that turn if any of the Almoravid cavalry units descend the hill. If, during the Muslim movement phase of **turn "X"** any Almoravid cavalry units descend one level down a slope, Christian reinforcements arrive on **turn "X+3"** (or **turn 8**, whichever comes first).

All four units arrive in the same turn. They are placed and moved one at a time so as not to break the stacking rules if they decide to enter the same hex.

If there is an enemy unit in the entry hex, the reinforcements cannot arrive in that hex, they must enter through any other hex between 1401 and 2801.

If they enter one of the two hexes in front of an enemy unit they cannot move that turn.

10.2. Exiting the map
After the arrival of the Christian reinforcements, the Muslim side gains 2 VPs for each cavalry unit that leaves the map between hexes 1001 and 1201.

One turn after the arrival of the Christian reinforcements, any Christian cavalry unit may leave the map between hexes 1401 and 2801. They are not considered eliminated and do not count towards morale or victory points.

One turn after the arrival of the Christian reinforcements, Alfonso VI may exit the map between hexes 1401 and 2801. He is not considered eliminated and does not count towards morale or victory points.

The game ends after the Muslim player's turn. The Christian player receives as many points as the number of the turn in which Alfonso VI left.

11. Initial Deployment

In the initial set-up, each player's units start facing the opposing player's units.

The game begins on turn 3 and ends on turn 12 or at the end of the turn in which Alfonso VI decides to leave from the north of the map.

Christian Army

Note. The battle of Sagrajas was atypical in that King Alfonso VI moved forward with cavalry to try to surprise the Muslims and win the battle in a gigantic armoured coup. The display shows the situation just before the Christian charge with the infantry lagging behind.

• Cavalry (25 units) 1602-1802; 1703-1803; 1705-1905; 2105-2305; 2505-2705; 1706-1806; 2106-2206; 2506-2606. (Leaders Alfonso VI and Álvar Fáñez are placed on any unit of the player's choice)

Note. You are free to place the pieces as you wish. We recommend that those with charge capability be placed further forward.

• Infantry (4 units) (*Reinforcements*, see *10.1*).

There are 12 infantry units. You choose four of them to act as reinforcements. The remaining eight will be used in the additional scenario.

Muslim Army

Note. The plan of the cautious Amir Yusuf ibn Tatsufin was to set up a curtain of Taifa units in the plain in order to contain the cavalry's shock, to place the North African infantry in reserve and to group the cavalry on the left wing for the counter-attack. The right wing of the Muslim force was supported by the marshes and the river, so that the collapse of the Muslim centre could be contained by the reserves, there was no possibility of envelopment by a Christian left wing.

• Granada (5 infantry, 3 cavalry) 1510-1810; 1611-1911 (player's choice)

• Seville (5 infantry, 4 cavalry, al-Mu'tamid leader on any unit) 1910-2310; 2011-2311 (player's choice)

• Badajoz (5 infantry, 3 cavalry, al-Mutawakkil leader on any unit) 2410-2710; 2411-2711 (player's choice)

• Almoravid infantry (15) 1713-2413; 1714-2314

• Almoravid cavalry (15, leader Yusuf on any unit) 1012-1212; 1013-1313; 1014-1314; 1015-1315.

12. Victory Conditions

At the end of the game, if Yusuf or Alfonso has not been killed (which would cause an automatic victory for the opposing army), each player counts his score as follows:

Muslims
• As many points per unit eliminated as its combat value.

• 2 points for each Almoravid cavalry unit that left the map between hexes 1001 and 1201 after the arrival of Christian reinforcements.

Christians
• As many points per unit eliminated as its combat value.

• X points, where X is Alfonso VI's turn of departure.

• 15 points if the game ends on turn 12 with Alfonso on the map.

Both armies
• 5 points for each enemy leader eliminated.

• 1 point for each enemy unit on the map that is in rout.

If one of the two players gets **10 points more than the other he is considered the winner**, otherwise the result is a draw.

13. Aditional scenario
Assault on the Christian camp.

Part of the battle of Sagrajas was fought beyond the clash depicted in this simulation. With this small scenario we want to give the players the opportunity to recreate the attack of the Almoravid cavalry on the unsuspecting Christian camp.

This scenario can be played right after a normal game of the battle of Sagrajas, since the troops that the players would have voluntarily taken off the map in the normal game will act as reinforcements in this one.

The map (located at the bottom of the help sheet) depicts the Christian camp

Muslim Emir. Cántigas de Santa María.

that was located a few kilometres north of the Muslim camp, settled on the right bank of the Gévora, between the river and a holm oak grove.

Next to the map there are numbered squares, in which the different units involved in the battle will be placed. The number printed on each square indicates the turn of entry.

The turn and morale markers next to the **Battle of Sagrajas** map will also be used.

13.1. Preparation
In the initial set-up, each player's units start facing according to his choice.

The game begins on turn 1 and ends on turn 8.

Four Christian and four Almoravid units start on the map, the rest are placed in the assigned squares and will enter as reinforcements on the corresponding turn.

The Almoravid is the first player of each turn.

Christian Army
• Infantry (8). Of the eight infantry units not used in *The Battle of Sagrajas*, four are placed inside the camp (in hexes 1702, 1703, 1802 and 1805) and four in square 3.

• Cavalry (?). An A5 unit with a charge capacity is placed next to the Alfonso VI leader counter in box 5. Cavalry units that made it off the map (per *10.2*) are also placed in box 5. (If this scenario is played separately from *The Battle of Sagrajas*, no additional units are placed here).

Muslim Army
• Almoravid (?) cavalry. Of the cavalry units that went off-map (per *10.2*) place four in hexes 1304, 1305, 1405, and 1306; the rest in square 1. (If playing this *Battle of Sagrajas stand-alone scenario*, place, randomly selected, four units on the map and three in square 1.)

Alfonso VI.

• Almoravid cavalry (2). Two units, A4 and B4, are placed next to Yusuf's leader counter in box 6.

13.2. *Reinforcements*
Each player receives reinforcement counters in the turn indicated on each square. At the start of the movement phase they are placed on the map in any of the entry hexes:

• South edge (from 1008 to 1608) for the **Christians**.

• West edge (from 1003 to 1008) for the **Muslims**.

Units, once placed, may move normally in that phase.

Units arrive on the turn indicated. They are placed and moved one at a time so as not to break the stacking rules if they decide to enter the same hex.

If there is an enemy unit in the entry hex, reinforcements cannot arrive in that hex, they must enter through any other hex available to their side.

13.3. *Morale Table*
If the scenario continues *The Battle of Sagrajas*, the morale markers for each contingent remain as they were in the previous game, except for the Almoravid cavalry which increases by one.

Remove those for Taifas and Almoravid infantry, which are not used in this scenario.

If the scenario is played independently, the starting values would be as indicated on the **Scenario Morale Table**.

13.4. *Terrain*
The different terrain types in this scenario are: plain and forest. There is also a new element type: fortification.

Note. *The Christian camp is represented on the scenario game plan by tents, it has no bearing on movement or combat.*

Forest
Entering a forest hex stops all movement. Attacking a unit in a forest hex applies a -1 attack modifier. You cannot fire at a unit in a forest hex.

Fortifications
Fortifications are always located between two hexes.

• If they have three stakes drawn on them, they are a fortification.

• If they have two, they are a weak fortification.

• The point of the stake indicates the outer hex, the other end being the inner hex.

• An attack from the outside receives a -2 or -1 modifier depending on whether the fortification is normal or weak.

• A shot from outside a fortification receives a -1 modifier.

All terrain effects are included in the **Terrain Table** which is on the help sheet with the game plans.

13.5. *Rout*
• Routed almoravid units must move to the west side of the board.

• Christian units move south, if outside the camp, or north if inside the camp.

13.6. *Condiciones de victoria*
At the end of the game, if neither Yusuf nor Alfonso has been killed (which would cause an automatic victory for the opposing army), the winner is decided according to Alfonso VI's *situation at the end of turn 9.*

• If Alfonso manages to reach the inside of the camp or any of the hexes on the northern edge of the map (1001 to 1901), the king is considered to have fled and gives the victory to the Christian side. Otherwise the Muslim side is the victor.

Note. *This is a short scenario and can quickly swing to one side or the other depending on how lucky or unlucky the die rolls are. The Almoravids can gain a numerical advantage if they managed to get troops out of the Battle of Sagrajas.*

Toledo assault. Christian army

Designer's notes
The Battle of Sagrajas, 1086

The first version of the Battle of Sagrajas game emerged as a module, as an adaptation of an existing system. A few years ago the American company Revolution Games published two designs by the English author Norman Smith about the battles of Hastings and Stamford Bridge. Both were part of the Invasion 1066 series and included both common and scenario-specific rules. They are not very complex designs that differentiate units by contingent and only include one combat value on each counter. The games are fast and dynamic, with enough variability between them, as different opportunities arise in each game, offered by the results of the dice rolls.

For these reasons I thought it would be a good idea to look for a battle in the peninsula at the end of the 11th century and test the system with it. That's how I came to Sagrajas. The first version bore the not very original title of Invasion 1086: The Battle of Zalaca and, although there was already an iteration dating back to two years earlier, I had the opportunity to develop it at the 2019 BoardGameGeek wargame contest. There I was able to consolidate the main decisions of the game design: scale, units, deployment...

But first I had to look for information about the battle. All the accounts I found of the event were extremely vague and gave inaccurate or contradictory data. They emphasised Alfonso's haste, Yusuf's cunning and, above all, the historical importance of the battle. The simulations I found suffered from the same vagueness as the accounts: standard deployment and unrealistic estimates of forces. Moreover, none of them tried to simulate the two elements that I believe to be fundamental in this clash: the initial charge of the Christian cavalry and the attitude of the Almoravid general, first to wait and then to surprise the Christian flank.

I found the solution in the detailed book by José María González and Diego González: Zalaca. La Batalla en el siglo XI, where there were detailed and reasoned explanations of the location of the conflict and the forces of each side. For the first, I fully embraced the thesis of the authors who rejected as improbable the location of the battle near the present-day town of Sagrajas.

Until recently, historiography had not bothered much to study the exact location of the battlefield. The first proposals were the dehesa de Sagrajas, for obvious reasons, or near Villar del Rey, further north. These locations had the disadvantage of being too far from Badajoz (remember that the Muslim army was numerous and had to move not only troops but also support and supplies) and were not optimal for Almoravid tactics (Yusuf had an advantage and could choose the terrain on which to confront Alfonso). The idea that the battle took place a couple of kilometres north of the citadel of Badajoz, between the right bank of the River Gévora and the hill of Santa Engracia, has recently gained momentum. It was the best location Yusuf could have chosen while waiting for Alfonso's arrival. He would deploy the infantry in an impassable line and use the cavalry to surround the Christians himself.

On the size of the armies, it was the historian Bernard F. Reilly who gave the most accurate estimates, which were later picked up and qualified by the book mentioned above. The number of Muslims was double that of the Christians: between 7,500 and 8,000 Muslims compared to between 3,500 and 4,000 Christians.

The scale was conditioned by my initial decision to stick to the Invasion 1066 system. At first I thought it would be interesting to try to represent all the action between the two camps, from the Christian departure to their retreat, but I soon realised that this approach would require a total rethinking of the simulation. I decided to stick to depicting the initial clash in the vicinity of the Muslim camp, which was precisely the most interesting part of the confrontation.

The deployment, as we have already mentioned, represents the moment before the Christian cavalry charge against the Taifa army: Seville in the centre, Badajoz to its left and Granada to its right. In a second line, the Almoravid infantry and, in the elevations, the cavalry commanded by Yusuf. It should be noted that the men of the taifa of Granada were not accompanied at this time by their leader Abd Allah. It is not clear why, perhaps his timid character caused him to avoid the front line or he simply did not have time to get there. We know that he was there, in Badajoz, and he wrote about it in his memoirs, but his brief account of the events suggests that he did not witness them directly.

Once the deployment was decided, one of the first problems we faced was what to do with the Christian infantry. We know that part of the infantry was left behind because the cavalry went forward to give the coup de main and that the great majority remained guarding the camp and its environs. Hose who remained in the camp were later surprised by the attack of the Almoravid cavalry. The way to simulate this situation was to let the stragglers arrive as reinforcements and the rest did not intervene in this scenario.

Cavalry charge. 19th century engraving

Seville Taifa figures. Club El Último Tercio.
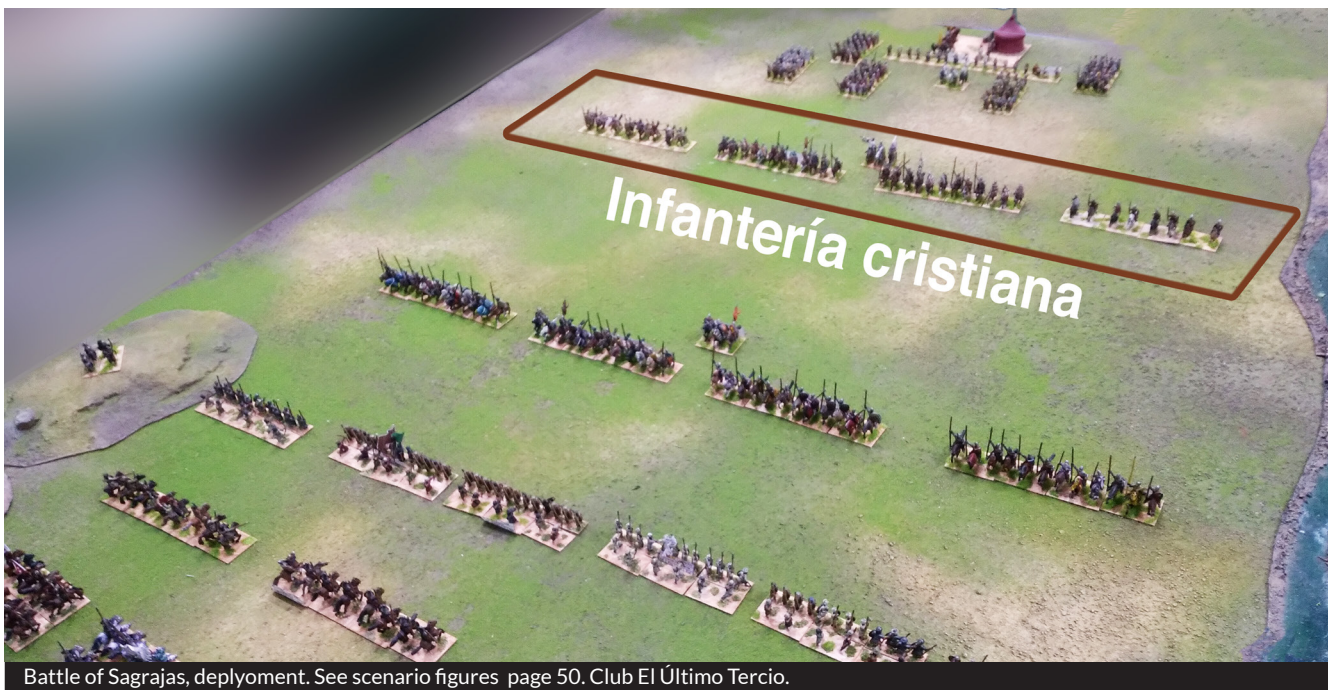
Battle of Sagrajas, deplyoment. See scenario figures page 50. Club El Último Tercio.

Strangely enough, the reinforcements allowed us to solve a major problem: the clear Muslim numerical superiority. If the Almoravid cavalry intervened from the beginning, the battle would be decided in the first few turns with an overwhelming Muslim victory. We know that Yusuf stood by for quite some time and did not allow his forces to participate until after he had seen the Peninsular armies decimate each other. How could we make the Muslim player hold back and not want to end the game quickly?.

The solution came precisely from these infantry reinforcements. If the Almoravid player decides to descend the hill, Alfonso discovers the ploy and hastens the arrival of the infantry, which brings forward its turn of entry. Moreover, from that moment on, the Christian player can retreat and it is up to him to decide in which turn the game will end. If the Almoravid player rushes, the Christian player only has to retreat and collect the points obtained from the initial clash against the Taifas. For these reasons we decided to give both players the opportunity to score points if their troops left the battlefield. The Muslim can choose to use some of his cavalry to crush Alfonso or to attack the camp. The Christian has to weigh up whether to keep the cavalry guarding the king's escape or to withdraw them earlier to avoid further losses.

It is the cavalry that takes on great importance in this battle. The clear Christian superiority allowed, thanks to the modifiers, to undertake the initial clash with guarantees, despite the cruelty of the octahedron. The Muslim cavalry, on the other hand, was light and used tactics to weaken and disorganise the opponent. We have decided to include rules to simulate the tornafuye and the harassment of mounted archers. Both tactics are very similar and could have been unified in this rulebook but I have chosen to differentiate them to reflect a certain heterogeneity in the Almoravid troops, who were equipped with very diverse weapons, whether by bows, azagayas or swords. In any case, it is likely that at the Battle of Sagrajas, and in this simulation, these tactics were not used profusely and the Almoravids simply used their numerical advantage to dare to go toe-to-toe with the disorganised Christians. The Taifa infantry would act in a similar fashion, those who could withstand the initial shock would serve to weaken the Christians and this would be exploited by the Almoravid infantry waiting in the second line.

A simple morale system has been established that progressively weakens the contingents and can lead to the collapse of the taifa armies in the first few turns. Grenada's leaderless men are the most vulnerable. Even so, there is a small chance that some troops may recover out of the heat of battle and rejoin the battle again.

The battle of Sagrajas offers great possibilities for exploration. Once the forces have been established and we know the location of the camps and the battlefield, we can simulate other possible scenarios: what if Alfonso had completely surprised the Muslim forces as he intended; what if he had held back his march and waited for the infantry; what tactical disposition would he have used? Moreover, on the Almoravid side we can play with the possibility that the contingent included camels, drums or fanatics to add a little colour to the scenario. It is for this reason that we invite the reader to explore these variants or to wait for future issues of the magazine where we intend to publish an alternative scenario to extend the life of the game.

By Enrique Blasco

* Explanatory notes on strategy at Sagrajas 1086
by Dermot Quigley

The *tornafuye* or karr wa-farr is a military tactic originating from the Maghreb tribes which was adopted by the Nasrid in their overall strategy. After a short confrontation, the Nasrid horsemen simulate leaving the field at a gallop, causing them to be pursued by the Christian forces, leading them into difficult terrain, leading them into an ambush or buying time to attack at a more appropriate time.
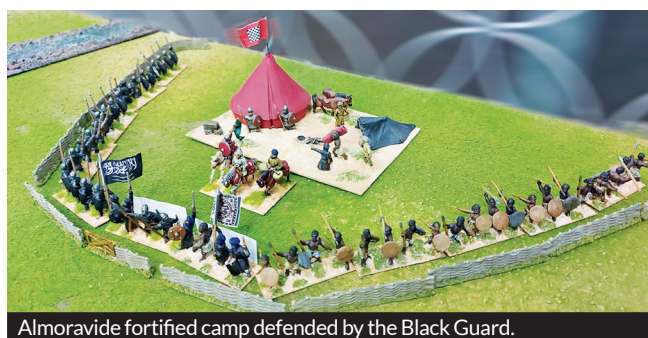
Almoravide fortified camp defended by the Black Guard.