



# A Bridge Too Near

Crossing the Rubicon, 49 BC



By Dave Townsend

*Not every tactical battle involves miles of troops in line. In "Crossing the Rubicon," the task involves rushing a bridge at a fordable river, affording new commanders a chance to flex their command abilities with a small number of troops. Here, Dave Townsend provides a few insights to help you avoid embarrassment in front of the troops.*

—SKT

**Scenario:** "Crossing the Rubicon" published in *C3i* Nr. 4.

**Balance:** 70% Caesarians

**Attraction:** Three of Caesar's veteran cohorts have four turns to capture a bridge defended by five Pompeian recruit cohorts. A great learning scenario.

**Pompeian Advantages:** Numbers, Terrain, Time Limit

**Caesarian Advantages:** Cohort Class, Troop Quality

**Tactical Overview:** The legionary cohorts are not identical. Make sure that you choose the highest TQ units. Remember, though, that the Pompeians can't use the 1st cohort.

The limited command situation— one tribune per side, with no trumping — lets you concentrate on the combat mechanics, but it also makes the scenario volatile. The initiative die roll gives either player a 50% chance of back-to-back turns (shades of the *Third Reich* flip-flop), which is especially dangerous here because there aren't many units to guard your flanks. If you are still learning the game, you may want to try regular sequential turns

until the combat routines become second nature.

Write off routed units. You generally have neither the leadership nor the time to rally.

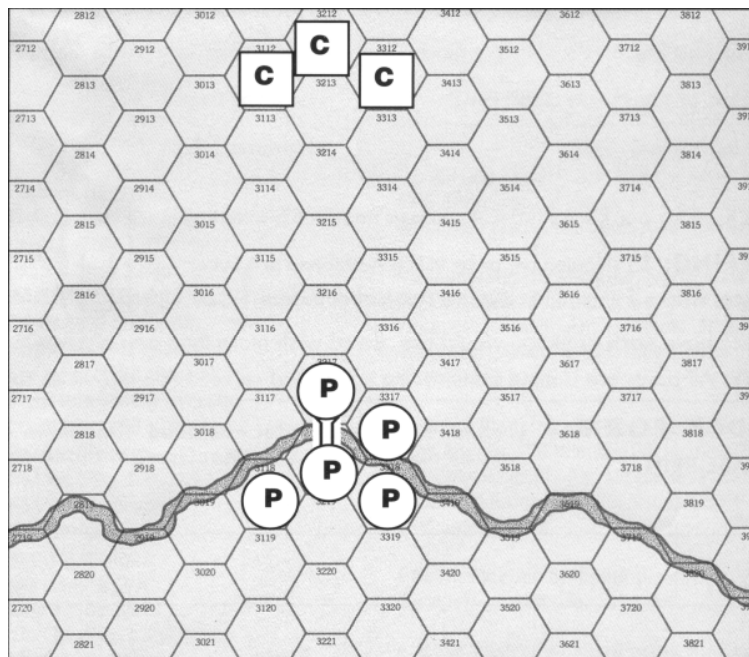
With no commanders higher than tribunes, a leader's death will immobilize his army. Keep your leaders out of enemy ZOCs. The combat bonus just isn't worth it.

**Pompeians:** Notice that the XVI legion's cohorts have different cohesion levels. Make sure you choose the ones with TQ 6.

You've got the numbers, but you are forced to set up first. Since the Caesarians get to see your

deployment, and then might even move first, you must set up carefully to avoid a quick rush on the bridge. However, you can't just pack everyone on the north bank of the river. The close quarters preclude column movement. Yet, in line formation any cohort crossing the river takes two hits. You'd rather make your opponent take those hits than you. Then again, with higher TQ he can afford them and you can't. So, you must keep some strength south of the river, too, to avoid a Caesarian crossing which you can't counter.

With this in mind, I'd split the Pompeian cohorts, guarding both sides of the bridge (see the



**Initial Setup:** Pompeian Forces (P) defend both ends of the bridge against the Caesarian Forces (C). Caesarian Forces prepare to assault northern end of bridge.

accompanying diagram). The ideal first turn would see you with the initiative, letting you move to block Caesar's advance and to bring other cohorts across the river, depending on the likely Caesarian line of advance.

If Caesar wins the initiative, you still have somewhat of a chance to hold the bridge if it's rushed—and if you do survive, you will get some nice flanking possibilities.

Remember, you need only hold off the Caesarians for four turns.



**Caesarians:** You don't have enough forces or time to indulge in fancy maneuvers, but with

your higher TQ you can better afford to cross the river than the Pompeians. Concentrate wherever they are weakest.

Your attack superiority makes even frontal assaults worthwhile, but your flanks are vulnerable as soon as you commit your forces. This means you might prefer to go second, since later back-to-back attacks may allow you to end the game before the Pompeians can attack your open flanks.

**Balancing Suggestion:** Make the Caesarians set up first. Alternately, they set up at least seven hexes (i.e. more than one move away) from the bridge.

**Clarification:** The victory conditions state, "Caesar wins if the both [sic] hexes adjoining the bridge are secured by the end of the fourth game turn." What exactly does "secured" mean? Occupied by friendly units? Last occupied by friendly units? Do enemy ZOCs matter? My guess, based on the historical notes, is that it means "last occupied by friendly units and free of enemy ZOCs."



## Feedback Questions and Results

Issue Nr.12, 2000

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### QUESTIONS

Questions 1 through 18 ask you to rate this issue, its articles and graphics (0=no opinion; 1=poor to 5=excellent).

1. Inside GMT
2. **WAR GALLEY** Scenarios: *Quinquereme*
3. INSERT: **DiF Module** – '48 Arab-Israeli War
4. **TIGERS in the MIST** – Primer
5. **TIGERS in the MIST** – 7th Army Attacks
6. **JUSTINIAN** – *The Gambit*
7. **WAR GALLEY**: *Multi-Player*
8. INSERT: **C3i Nr. 12 Countersheet**
9. INSERT: Nr.12 Player A&I sheets
10. **Army Group North**: *What you won't see.*
11. **Zero!** Sneak Peek
12. **Saratoga/Brandywine**: *Tactical Matrix*
13. **Battles of Julius Caesar**: *The Nike Gambit*
14. **Battles of Julius Caesar**: *A Bridge too Near*
15. **Successors**: *Adding Companions*
16. This Issue Overall
17. Graphic Design of this Issue Overall
18. On the basis of this issue only would you be inclined to resubscribe (Y/N)?
19. What is your age?
20. How long have you been playing wargames?

Questions 21 through 44 ask you to rate the following games, first in terms of game design, second ease of play and third graphic design using a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being best:

21. **Brandywine** (Design)
22. **Brandywine** (Playability)
23. **Brandywine** (Graphics)
24. **Triumph & Glory** (Design)
25. **Triumph & Glory** (Playability)
26. **Triumph & Glory** (Graphics)
27. **Austerlitz 1805** (Design)
28. **Austerlitz 1805** (Playability)
29. **Austerlitz 1805** (Graphics)
30. **Risorgimento 1859** (Design)
31. **Risorgimento 1859** (Playability)
32. **Risorgimento 1859** (Graphics)
33. **Battle Line** (Design)
34. **Battle Line** (Playability)
35. **Battle Line** (Graphics)
36. **Galaxy** (Design)
37. **Galaxy** (Playability)
38. **Galaxy** (Graphics)
39. **Ukraine'43** (Design)
40. **Ukraine'43** (Playability)
41. **Ukraine'43** (Graphics)
42. **For the People** (Design)
43. **For the People** (Playability)
44. **For the People** (Graphics)

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Feedback Card comments from <b>C3i</b> Nr.11:	
"..Really enjoyed the game <b>Cataphract</b> , I would like to see Modules for the battles of Adrianople (378 AD) and Yarmuk (636 AD)..." — D. Sabolek, Clear Lake, Iowa	
"..Thanks Rodger for 11 great issues; please don't breakup articles...would like to see GBoH for Imperial Rome and the Crusades..." — Andy St. Clair, Chicago, IL	

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