

Timeline of the Mediterranean

By Stephen Jackson

GBoH battles in **Bold**.

West	East
	1193 BC Trojan War ends in destruction of Troy.
-900 BC Centuries of gradual Celtic migration into Europe.	
814 City of Carthage founded by Phoenician Tyre.	-800 Greeks establish trading colonies in Spain, Sicily, southern Italy, France and the Black Sea coast. Phoenicians settle Africa, Cyprus, Spain and Sicily.
753 Traditional foundation of Rome by descendants of Trojan refugees.	-700 Lycurgus transforms Sparta into a military society.
	612 Nabopolassar of Babylon destroys Nineveh, ending Assyrian Empire.
-580 Periodic warfare in Sicily between Phoenician cities, backed by Carthage, and Greek colonies, backed by their founding cities.	587 Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem, exiles the Hebrews.
	-540 Cyrus the Great brings down the tottering Babylonian Empire, establishes the Achaemenid Persian Empire; defeats King Croesus of Lydia.
535 Carthaginians defeat Greeks in naval battle of Alalia.	536 Cyrus frees the Jews and assists in rebuilding Jerusalem.
	525 Persians under Cambyses defeat Pharaoh Psamtik III, conquering Egypt.
	517 Darius the Great conquers provinces as far east as India.
508 Roman monarchy abolished, Republic declared. King Tarquinus Superbus exiled.	512 Darius the Great campaigns in Balkan Europe against Scythians.
-500 Carthaginian expeditions travel Atlantic coasts of Africa and Europe.	498 Athens supports Ionian revolt against Persia. Ionians burn Sardis.
496 Aulus Postumius defeats Etruscan attempt to reinstate King Tarquin the Proud at battle of Lake Regillus.	
494 Latin League formed under leadership of Rome.	494 Persia defeats Ionian League in sea battle of Lade .
	490 Persian invasion defeated by Athenians at Marathon .
480 Gelo of Syracuse defeats Carthaginians at Himera.	



A PRIMER FOR *Simple GBoH*

By Steven A. Carey

THE BASICS

Each of the classic *GBoH* titles has its own rulebook, and though they are similar, it is still necessary to familiarize oneself with the pertinent individual sections as you switch back-and-forth between games. Not so with *SGBoH*, whose rules cover all of the appropriate titles in one standard set. Yet, the same units, orders of battles, and rout levels are used for the scenarios, so it is a breeze to jump between battles from different games by utilizing *SGBoH*. **Individual special scenario rules** are handled on a case-by-case basis, with the more important ones being retained while the now obsolete or seemingly obscure ones are generally discarded.

MOVEMENT

In *GBoH*, individual **leaders** are activated, and, when their actions are complete, they are finished. In *SGBoH*, **formations** (along with their assigned leaders) are chosen, and there is no limit to how many times this can be done (more on this later). The reverse "moved" side of the individual counters is no longer needed as a reminder, but instead it serves as a "reduced" side for certain troops (see Combat). As leaders gradually become finished in *GBoH*, turns wind down to completion. But in *SGBoH* play is contiguous and each player turn requires the utmost situational awareness surrounding all formations since any one of them can be activated. This presents an added strategic element to *SGBoH* as both sides must weigh their options carefully when deciding which troops to activate, and these choices are often not easy to make.

(Thanks to Brandon Einborn and Alan Ray for their assistance in the preparation of this article.)

SIMPLE GBoH offers an almost unique opportunity in the annals of board-based ancient gaming—namely the chance to recreate the most famous battles of early history and to do so in a smoother, more playable, less time-consuming, and even more fun manner than ever before. Utilizing the basic framework of the original *GREAT BATTLES OF HISTORY* designs, *SIMPLE GBoH (SGBoH)* is a restructured, streamlined, and, indeed, simpler version of that system. Yet, it is in no way "simple."

Covering *DELUXE ALEXANDER*, *SPQR*, *CAESAR: THE CIVIL WARS*, *CAESAR: CONQUEST OF GAUL*, *CATAPHRACT* and all of their related modules, *SGBoH* is very comprehensive in its scope. Scenarios from *C3i* and the *SPQR PLAYER'S GUIDE* are not included, but conversions are in production and will soon appear.

SGBoH is a completely self-contained set of rules; there is no carryover from *GBoH*. Those players familiar with *GBoH* should not assume that certain rules also apply to *SGBoH*. Unless specifically mentioned, they don't.

GMT has no intention of abandoning its legion of loyal *GBoH* fans, but instead offers an alternative play method to old and new players alike, allowing them to enjoy the legacy of the *GBoH* line. In my view, the design/development team has succeeded here with flying colors, so let's take a look at how they accomplished this by taking a comparative tour of the *SGBoH* and *GBoH* systems.

Primer: SIMPLE GBOH

In *SGBoH*, there are no **trump** or **momentum** actions, having been replaced by a mechanic called **seizure**. This allows the overall commander(s) (and certain individual subordinate leaders on occasion) to roll against their initiative rating in an attempt to take back-to-back turns. The amount of seizure tries is strictly limited per commander per scenario, so this is another resource/ decision-making element that factors into *SGBoH*. Repetitive seizure is not possible because a side is never allowed to take three player turns in a row.

COMBAT

Combat is mandatory in *SGBoH*, even for out-of-command units who are next to the enemy. The Troop Quality (TQ) check prior to melee is gone—a significant time-saver. Actual resolution is much easier

in *SGBoH*, being handled by a lone die roll on the single-column Shock Result Table. **Weapon Superiority** is still crucial, with die roll modifiers (DRMs) applied depending on whether the attack is frontal or flank / rear. Just like in *GBoH*, the attacker has the advantage in *SGBoH* since he gains a positive movement bonus for the shock roll. There are other potential modifiers (TQ Differential, Size, Hits, Terrain and Leadership), but like climbing a ladder step-by-step, the process is quite simple and quickly becomes second nature. A helpful fold-out chart containing these DRMs and rules reminders serves to aid the process. Additional rolls for TQ/ rout checks, leader casualties and cavalry pursuit will be required, but overall there is noticeably less die rolling in *SGBoH*.

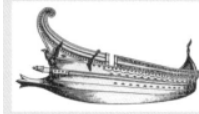
Cavalry pursuit has been limited in *SGBoH*—your mounted warriors may only pursue routed enemy horse, not his foot troops—another welcome change. Your valuable cavalry will no longer follow some low-TQ foot unit just to mop up. If your cavalry leader does go off-map in pursuit, remaining units in the

formation may still move (though they are considered out-of-command) instead of waiting around to be slaughtered.

A major departure from *GBoH*, **hits** in *SGBoH* cannot be removed. When a unit's accumulated hits reaches its TQ level, it simply routs and is removed from the board (no **rout movement** in *SGBoH*). In each scenario, certain high-quality troops (Phalanx, Roman Principes, etc.) may have a capacity to carry on in "**reduced**" condition, thus remaining in the game. Flip such a unit to its "moved" side, and this "reduced" unit has a TQ of 2 less than its original rating. These changes result in a lot less counter fidgetting.

Roman LG / CO and all X- or Farmed units no longer have a **missile capability**, but they can gain a positive DRM when attacking frontally units without this capability. Elephants lose their missiles in *SGBoH*, also. With no **ammunition** requirements, again we have fewer counters to manage in *SGBoH*. Missile troops can fire only once per phase, and have logical restrictions on their abilities (*e.g.*, javelin armed units may not missile attack if they start in a ZOC—after all, it is a little difficult to throw spears while engaged in hand-to-hand combat). Slingers, Archers, Foot Javelins, Mounted Javelins and Artillery are all rated for effectiveness and range, so the chrome of individual missile fire still remains.

Skirmishers can be more effective in *SGBoH* simply because the missile hits that they cause are permanently attached to the target. I like this aspect of the design. When missile troops are first contacted by the enemy they can either stay put and try to inflict a hit with reaction fire **or** retreat before combat—they can't do both. These poor auxiliaries will usually suffer heavily if they remain to launch missiles—yet another welcome decision nexus thrust upon each player.



	480	Xerxes I of Persia overruns the "300 Spartans" at Thermopylae, defeats Athenian fleet at Artemisium , and burns Athens. Persian fleet defeated by Greeks at Salamis .
	479	Persian army destroyed by Spartan-led coalition under Pausanias at Plataea . Greeks defeat Persians at Mycale in Asia Minor.
	477	Athens forms the Delian League.
	467	Cimon of Athens defeats Persians at the Eurymedon River.
	460	First Peloponnesian War starts between Athens and Corinth.
458	Dictator Lucius Quinctus Cincinnatus defeats Celtic invasion at Algidus.	
	457	Sparta defeats Athens at Tanagra. Athens defeats Thebes at Oenophyta.
	446	Theban coalition defeats Athens at Coronea.
	445	Following numerous revolts in the Delian League, Pericles of Athens signs the "Thirty Years Truce" with Sparta and its allies.
439	Cincinnatus made dictator again to quell a Plebian revolt.	
	431	Athenian intervention in a dispute between Corinth and Corcyra prompts Sparta to declare war, starting Second Peloponnesian War. Spartan army ravages Attica for three years.
	429	Athenian fleet defeats Peloponnesians at Naupactus. Pericles dies of plague in Athens.
	425	Small Spartan garrison at Sphacteria surrenders to Athenian light troops.
	424	Pagondas of Thebes defeats Athens at Delium.
	423	Cleon of Athens and Brasidas of Sparta are both killed in battle at Amphipolis.
	418	Agis of Sparta defeats Argos and Athens at Mantinea.
413	Athenian expedition against Syracuse suffers disastrous defeat.	
	412	Persia provides Sparta with financial aid.
	406	Athenians defeat superior Spartan fleet at Arginusae .

405	Carthaginians defeat Syracusans at Gela.	405	Spartans under Lysander defeat Athenians at Aegospotami.
		404	A blockaded Athens capitulates, ending the Peloponnesian War.
		401	Cyrus II defeated by Artaxerxes II at Cunaxa . Retreat of the Ten Thousand under Xenophon.
		399	Socrates executed in Athens.
		397-395	Agessilaus of Sparta campaigns in Persian Asia Minor.
397	Carthaginians defeat Syracusan fleet at Catana .	395	With Persian support, Athens, Argos, Thebes, Corinth and other cities revolt against Spartan hegemony, defeating and killing Lysander at Haliartus.
		394	Agessilaus returns to Greece and defeats the coalition at Coronea.
		390	Celtic invasion under Brennus sacks Rome. Camillus begins military reforms that result in the legion.
		380	Egypt revolts against Persian rule.
		379	Pelopidas of Thebes initiates revolt against Spartan hegemony.
		376	Spartan fleet defeated by Athens at Naxos.
		371	Epaminondas of Thebes defeats Spartans at Leuctra .
		364	Pelopidas defeats Alexander of Pherae at Cynoscephalae, but is killed in the battle.
		362	Epaminondas defeats Athens and Sparta at Mantineia , but is killed. Theban power declines.
		359	Philip II becomes King of Macedon; gradually builds his formidable army.
		358	Philip defeats Illyrians at the Erigon Valley ; Macedonian strength grows steadily.
		353	Philip defeated by Phocians under Onomarchus in Thessaly.
		352	Philip defeats Onomarchus at the Crocus Fields ; elected Archon of Thessaly.
		348	Philip defeats Chalcidians at



Speaking of missile troops, **hit- and-run** still occurs in *SGBoH*, but there is no cumbersome movement. Instead, the rule is a refinement of the **harassment and dispersal** tactic first introduced in *CAESAR: CONQUEST OF GAUL*. Missile-capable foot units who start exactly two hexes away (or four hexes away for Light Cavalry) from their target (foot units still can't go after cavalry) can announce the hit-and-run attack. Simply check modifiers, roll the die, and inflict a hit if successful.

COMMAND

Command is often cited as one of the sticky mechanics of *GBoH*, but *SGBoH* handles this by simply requiring units of a particular formation to be within their leader's printed range, with extended contiguous lines allowed. Other leader ratings on their counters are ignored (except for initiative in seizure attempts). Certain **Line** or **Special** commands are available in many of the scenarios, thus permitting an overall commander's formation and one of his (in range) subordinate leader's formations to activate at the same time. Importantly, **Out-of-Command** troops may move (usually to guard a flank or to scoot back into command range), but they cannot move adjacent to any enemy units nor expend any movement points if in a ZOC (or have any enemy unit in their ZOC). Auxiliary troops like Skirmishers have no leaders— their formation is always in command. This makes sense to me since the role of these light troops was usually fairly well defined on the ancient battlefield—screen enemy troop movements and harass them with missile fire.



CONTINUITY

Facing remains the same (to the vertex), and elements like reaction facing changes, frontal ZOCs, and missile fire zones are still present.

Likewise **Stacking** is normally not permitted, with only the Romans (same type/same formation) and Artillery (plus one Infantry) being able to occupy the same hex. The potent Double-Depth Phalanx/ Hoplite units are retained—they are not considered a stack, but instead are treated as a single (really big!) unit.

A perennial favorite, **Elephants** still have the potential to rampage the battlefield in *SGBoH*, either when they rout because of too many cohesion hits or their failure to pass a TQ check after suffering a missile hit. Once again, the process has been simplified and the lumbering beasts don't roam around like wraiths in search of targets anymore.

There are a handful of other rules and modifiers covering **Germanic Cavalry, Chariots, Cataphracted Cavalry, Fortifications, Column Movement**, etc., but these are situation specific and only come into play in certain scenarios.

PLAYING TIME

SGBoH is marketed as being quicker playing than classic *GBoH*. While this is certainly true, in my experience the estimated play times listed in the *SGBoH* playbook are often exceeded. Still, in almost every case, *SGBoH* scenarios conclude faster (up to 50 *per cent* in the larger battles) than their *GBoH* counterparts.

Solitaire play is excellent utilizing both systems, though *SGBoH* is easily the more manageable of the two.

OPTIONAL IDEAS

Repetitive Activation. One of the aspects of *SGBoH* that takes some familiarization is the way the system models time; it just feels odd. By allowing one side to activate the same formation over-and-over again without penalty, and so permitting other portions of the battlefield to sit idle,

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potential abuses can occur. The argument here is that the opposing side should be maneuvering his formations to bring pressure to bear on different sections of the battlefield, and often this is indeed the case. Still, if Alexander wants to activate only his Companion Heavy Cavalry and run roughshod over the Illyrian Light Infantry at Pelium, then he can do just that. Of course, without the ability to remove hits, there is a finite limit to this activity.



If this system of chronic formation activation bothers you, I propose the following optional rule ideas: If any formation is chosen on **three** consecutive player turns, then each unit receives one hit prior to the third activation. Or if you don't mind keeping track, apply the 1 hit penalty to any of your formations that activates three times before all your other formations have activated at least once (then reset the "activation clock" after every formation has moved). This will make a player think twice about going to the well once too often.

First Activation. Unless a certain scenario lists a special rule otherwise, the typical game of *SGBOH* starts randomly by each player rolling one die, with the highest number going first. Having the starting activation can be rather important because the initial move can't be seized, and after his turn is done, the first player is allowed to try and seize his opponent's first turn thus earning back-to-back moves at the beginning of the game. If you'd like to refine who actually starts a scenario, try this house rule: Both players roll one die and add the initiative rating of their overall

commander (or the highest-rated OC, if more than one) to see who goes first. Be aware that this can give even more of an advantage to the high rated and heavily-favored leaders (like Caesar).

CONCLUSION

One of the most frequent comments that I've heard over the years when discussing the *GBoH* line is from fellow hobbyists who own and have admired the games in the series from afar, but have never quite gotten around to playing them. For many, *SGBOH* is the key to unlock that door, allowing the uninitiated to sit down and enjoy the series for the first time with only a modicum of effort. For those who have disdained *GBoH* due to perceived complexity and a high "fiddle" factor, *SGBOH* presents the opportunity to take a more appealing and fresh look at the designs. For those who have been relishing the classic *GBoH* series for years, this article is not intended to dissuade you or diminish the pleasure that you obtain from the original system. Instead, *SGBOH* can offer a parallel, yet better paved, path to the same destination.

GMT will be supporting *SGBOH* simultaneously with future *GBoH* projects. That is certainly good news. For now, we have a

plethora of converted battles to explore, and when some of the out-of-print games become available again (and the *C3i* scenarios are converted), virtually unlimited ancients action can occur. Indeed, the more games and modules that you own, the better the bargain here. *SGBOH* has set a new standard in the hobby that is unlikely to be eclipsed anytime soon.

Ed. Note: Existing C3i GBoH scenarios have been undergoing conversion and testing, and will be made available by GMT. It is our intention at C3i to publish scenario information for both systems in our upcoming historical articles. — SKT



350	Celts conquer and settle northern Italy.	Olynthus.
348	Trade Pact between Rome and Carthage begins eighty years of cordial relations.	346 Philip is defeated by Athenians with Persian backing at Byzantium. Phocians capitulate to Philip, giving him their votes on the Amphictyonic Council.
343-41	First Samnite War strains the Latin League.	343 Philip appoints Aristotle as tutor to his son Alexander.
341	Syracuse defeats Carthage at Crimissos R.	342 Artaxerxes III of Persia reconquers Egypt with assistance of Theban troops.
340	Rome defeats revolt of Latin allies at Veseris.	338 Philip establishes hegemony over the Greeks at battle of Chaeronea.
338	Rome defeats Latins again at Trifanum. Latin League of city-states dissolved in favor of a single nation under Rome.	337 Philip convenes the Hellenic League at Corinth, declares a Sacred War against Persia.
		336 Philip II assassinated. Alexander III assumes the throne, defeating tribal revolts at Lyginus and Pelium. Darius III assumes the throne of Persia.
		335 Thebes revolts against Macedonian hegemony, and Alexander orders destruction of the city.
		334 Alexander defeats Persians at the river Granicus and quickly takes Asia Minor.
		333 Alexander defeats Darius at Issus and enters Syria.
		332 Alexander takes Phoenician city of Tyre, is wounded three times besieging Gaza, and conquers Egypt. Alexander is crowned Pharaoh.
		331 Alexander defeats Darius at Gaugamela (aka Arbela).
	331 Alexander of Epirus campaigns in Italy allied to Tarentum and Rome. He is killed fighting the Samnites at Pandosia.	330 Darius murdered. Alexander occupies Babylon and other major Persian cities, ending the Persian Empire. Alexander orders executions of Parmenion and Philotas for an alleged conspiracy. Viceroy Antipater defeats Spartans under Agis II at Megalopolis.
		329 Alexander enters the Hindu Kush. Spitamenes ambushes Macedonians at Jaxartes and Samarkand.
		327 Alexander reduces several