

Game Title: **Acre: the third crusade opens**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

13.0 INTRODUCTION

The destruction of the Crusader army by Saladin at Hattin in 1187 had led to the collapse of the Crusader kingdoms in the Levant, including the loss of Jerusalem. Guy of Lusignan, erstwhile ruler of the city appealed to the Europeans for aid, which soon arrived. Without waiting for the three main Crusader armies—led by King Philip of France, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, and Richard I of England, Guy set out to take Acre (pronounced Ok-er) on the Levantine coast.

His first assault repulsed, Guy settled in for a siege. Meanwhile, Saladin gathered a portion of his army and rode to lift the siege. After preliminary skirmishing, the armies met east of the city on 4 October.

14.0 SET UP

14.1 First Player

The Crusader player sets up first. The Crusader player is the first player until the Muslim player declares his strategic withdrawal (15.5).

Place the Turn marker in the "1" box of the TRT.

14.2 Crusader Deployment

Set up line facing Acre (hexes 0207-0212): four Trebuchet counters (15.3) and seven infantry units.

Crusader camp hexes (0514, 0515, 0614): place a camp marker and one unit in each.

All remaining crusader units must be on the eastward-facing set up line (hexes 0902-0621). Every hex of the eastward-facing line must have a unit or a ZOC in it.

Crusader leaders: may be placed with any unit.

14.3 Muslim Deployment

Set aside the seven units of the Acre garrison (see 15.4).

Place a Muslim camp marker and one unit in each of hexes 2129, 2229, and 2329.

All remaining Muslim units must be placed on the Muslim set up line (1201-0324). Each hex on the line must have a unit or a ZOC in it.

Muslim leaders may be placed with any unit outside the Acre fortress.

14.4 Crusader Morale

Demoralization: 80 VP (see 16.2).

Disintegration: 110 VP (see 16.2).

Rally successful: 1-3.

14.5 Muslim Morale

Demoralization (before strategic withdrawal): 50 VP (see 16.2).

Disintegration (before strategic withdrawal): 75 VP (see 16.2).

Demoralization (after strategic withdrawal): 70 VP (see 16.2).

Disintegration (after strategic withdrawal): 100 VP (see 16.2).

Rally successful: 1-5.

15.0 SPECIAL RULES

15.1 Karr-wa-Farr

During the Crusader melee combat phase, after the Crusader player has announced a melee against a Muslim infantry unit with a dot, the Muslim unit may conduct a regular retreat before combat (see 11.2) or it may conduct Karr-wa-Farr, the tactic of a feigned retreat to draw a Crusader unit into advancing too far and making it vulnerable to being surrounded. If the retreating unit is not disrupted, roll one die for each involved Crusader unit. Subtract 3 from the result and subtract the highest value of any Crusader leader in that melee. If the result is zero or less, the Muslim unit retreats normally per 11.2 and the Crusader unit may advance or not advance at its option.

If the result is positive, the Muslim unit retreats that number of hexes and one of the Crusader units must follow the Muslim unit retreat path, stopping when the retreating unit stops. Ignore the ZOC of any other Muslim units: in other words, treat it as a required advance after combat. Note: Karr-wa-Farr may not be used if the Crusader attack includes a charging cavalry unit.

15.2 Camp Hexes & Plunder

When a unit enters an enemy camp hex, it is captured; remove it from the map. Then roll one die; on a roll of 4-6, the unit scatters to plunder; remove it from the map.

15.3 Trebuchets

The trebuchets represent the siege weapons and stone stockpiles needed to prosecute the siege. Although they could be replaced, it would take weeks of backbreaking work.

The four counters cannot move. Crusader units may move into and through the hexes freely, and may stop in one at the end of movement and/or combat. If an Muslim unit enters the hex, the trebuchet is captured; remove it from the map.

15.4 The Fortress of Acre

Hexes 0108-0112 represent the fortress walls protecting the city. Crusader units may not enter or attack into these hexes, and Crusader ZOC do not extend into them.

The units of the Acre garrison may attempt a sortie on any one game turn during the second stage of the battle. These units are placed, one unit per hex, on the Acre fortress hexes. While in these hexes, they are allowed to ignore Ar results.

15.5 Muslim Strategic Withdrawal

To simulate the see-saw nature of this battle, the battle is divided into two stages. At the beginning of any Muslim movement phase after the Muslims have lost 50VP (and are demoralized), the Muslim player may announce a strategic withdrawal (Note: if the Muslim player chooses not to withdraw, he risks disintegration before his next opportunity to announce a withdrawal). Remove the Muslim forces from the map being careful not to mix them with the eliminated units.

All disorganized units of both sides flip to their organized side. Conduct a special rally phase for both sides, rolling once for each eliminated unit (not eliminated leaders—each leader in play may be used once to influence a die roll).

After the rally, the Crusader player conducts a movement phase. No Crusader unit may enter a hex on the east or south map edges except to enter a Muslim camp hex.

The Muslim forces are then deployed along the easternmost hex row. The turn maker is restarted on Turn 1 with the Muslims moving first. Play through Turn 10, then calculate victory.

16.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

16.1 Clear Victory

Either player wins a clear victory if the enemy army disintegrates. The Muslim player wins a clear victory if at the end of the game he can trace a line of hexes free of enemy units or EZOCs from the eastern edge of the map to an Acre fortress hex.

16.2 Victory Points

If neither player realizes a clear victory, calculate the victory points for each player per the schedule below. The player with the greater total wins.

- 1 VP per eliminated enemy strength point
- 15 VP for the Crusader player if Saladin is a casualty
- 10 VP for the Muslim player if Guy is a casualty
- 2 VP times the leader value for any other leader casualty
- 5 VP per turn remaining in the first stage for the Crusader if the Muslim declares his strategic withdrawal (e.g. 50 VP if declared on Turn 1, 45 VP if declared on Turn 2, and so on).
- 5 VP per enemy camp captured
- 5 VP for the Moslem player for each Trebuchet destroyed

17.0 GAME NOTES

17.1 Designer's Notes

There were three issues not accounted for in the standard rules that had to be addressed in this design. First was the Moslem *karr-wa-farr* tactics. This already had been dealt with in the Arsuf design so it was a simple matter to transfer it to this game (fought by similar but not identical armies).

The citadel of Acre also had to be accounted for, particularly the sortie by the garrison. The solution was to make a special rule for the fortress hexes rather than for the units themselves. We did not include the possibility of breaking into the fortress in a coup because only a small portion of the garrison sortied.

Finally, there was the issue of the Moslem withdrawal. Historically, they pulled back, reorganized, and came forward again to only mixed success. We tried to craft the rule in such a way that the timing of the withdrawal is important and its effect is less than overwhelming.

17.2 Player Notes

This is a classic situation in that each player has a period of offense and one of defense. The Crusaders have the advantage in the early going with more powerful units. However, the Moslems get what amounts to a do-over after calling for the withdrawal, and should have the advantage in the second half if they have played carefully in the first.

Crusader. You must make hay while the sun shines. It is not enough to eliminate Moslem units, you must eliminate them without suffering heavy losses yourself because your recovery after the withdrawal is limited. Keep Augustus' principle in mind: *make haste slowly*. You must turn at least one Moslem flank, requiring a long line, but you cannot afford to leave the center too weak or you risk losing units. Keep the siege lines manned, not only to protect the trebuchets but to prevent a Moslem force getting loose behind your lines.

When the withdrawn Moslem units return, keep a solid line and fend them off as best you can. Don't hold on to ground at the cost of lost units.

Moslem. You have two critical decisions to make, both involving timing: when to make the sortie, and when to call for a withdrawal.

The simple advice on the sortie is make it when it will do the most damage. This will be when the Crusader has weakened his line so much so you have a chance for some easy kills. However, don't call for it just before you announce your withdrawal or you lose the use of the sortie force. The timing of the withdrawal is crucial. By definition you will have lost many units. Given the nature of the fighting, this means the momentum is going to swing every-more heavily against you. Get out while the getting is good to maximize your strength in the second half. On the other hand, if you have a chance at inflicting serious losses (say, a surrounded group of Crusaders), take it.

18.0 ORDERS OF BATTLE

Like all medieval battles the order of battle at Acre is speculative, this one more so than usual because accounts of the battle are intertwined with the two-year siege.

The force arrayed for battle both came from armies in the process of formation. Guy had only his retainers, some locally raised forces, the Templars, and the first group of reinforcements from Europe (what eventually would blossom into the Third Crusade). Saladin had his Mamluks, who were a standing force, and some hastily gathered levies. His army would not reach its full strength for some months.

The best estimate is the Crusaders totaled something less than 10,000 total, with as few as 400 knights, while Saladin had slightly more than 10,000 outside the walls, with as many as 5,000 available inside the fortress (though likely fewer took part in the sortie).