

# The Setup

In order to give the recently refurbished Spartans an outing, I created a fictional alliance between my Commagene and Persian satrapal army of Longawayoff for them to fight. Whilst the Spartans appeared stronger, the alliance had better cavalry and long range missile power which ought to give them a tactical advantage.

The battlefield had an impassable forest in the top left corner and then a crag and some low hills running across the battlefield. A large area of rising ground, edged in part by a dense wood, covered most of the right hand side of the battlefield. A scattering of open woods was placed in the bottom right corner with some other rough terrain along the edges of the battlefield.



# The Teams and Their Plans

The Spartans, led by their king Leonidas, fielded about 13,000 men. Of these 3,000 were good quality Spartan hoplites with about the same in poor quality supporting troops. The rest of their army came from their allies from Tegea, Messene and the Lower Laconian region. These provided another 4,000 mixed quality hoplites and a variety of supporting infantry.

Leonidas knew he had to close quickly to make best use of his hoplites and avoid being outshot and outflanked by the enemy cavalry.

He would advance on the right leading his hoplites with his own light troops and the Messene guarding his right flank. The Tegeans would advance on Leonidas' left and the Lower Laconians on the left flank.

The plan was to hit and break the enemy infantry quickly so that the overall morale of the enemy would crumble.

Antiochos IV of Commagene led the alliance which mustered 10,000 men.

Antiochos' own army had 3,000 phalangites, 1,000 cavalry and some foot archers. Apart from some of the cavalry quality was not too good across his army.

Xavier, satrap of Longawayoff, was classed as a reluctant ally. He fielded 1,000 reasonable cavalry, 1,000 good spear and bow armed infantry and about 1,000 not so good Arab cavalry and camelry. He also had 800 subject Ethiopian archers.

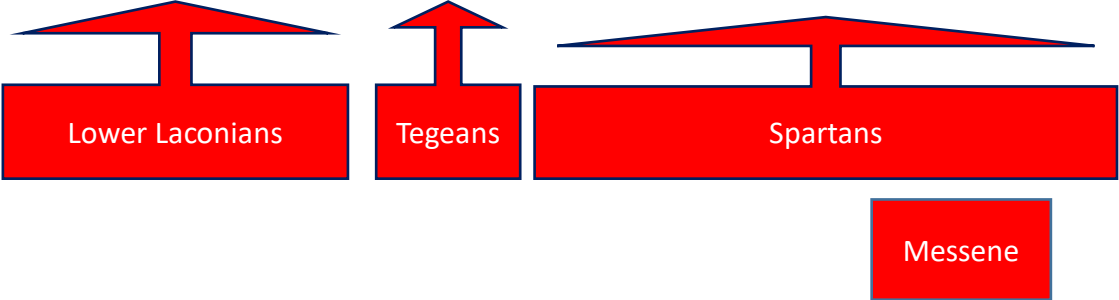
Antiochos wanted to spread the Spartan attack to give his limited number of phalangites the chance to break through.

Xavier and all his cavalry were to sweep out on the left flank and try to draw the enemy out, shoot at them and get round their flank. Antiochos' archers would try to do the same on the right flank.

Antiochos' cavalry would support the right flank of the phalangites and Xavier's infantry and the Ethiopian archers the left.

His plan depended on the cavalry drawing out the Spartan flank units and the archery weakening the hoplites before they engaged.

# The Deployments





# P1

The battle opened with a general advance by the Spartans whilst on the alliance side the wings moved forward but the infantry centre held its position.

**Commagene:**  
Archers advanced  
whilst rest held.

**Ethiopians:**  
Advanced.

**Xavier:** Cavalry moved to  
the wing whilst infantry  
held.



**Lower  
Laconians:**  
Advanced.

**Tegeans:**  
Advanced.

**Spartans:**  
Advanced.

**Messene:** Arrived  
on battlefield.

Note: arrows point  
at first Division in  
each Corps.

# P2

The Spartans continued moving forward. On the alliance left, Xavier's cavalry reached the high ground and paused before sweeping around the wood. The Commagene infantry started to advance.

**Commagene:**  
Army advanced,  
drifting to the  
right.

**Ethiopians:**  
Continued to  
advance.

**Xavier:** Cavalry moved to  
on to the high ground  
whilst infantry held.



**Lower Laconians:**  
Hoplites advanced  
but lights were  
delayed.

**Tegeans:**  
Continued  
to advance.

**Spartans:** Continued  
advancing with lights  
moving into wood.

**Messene:**  
Advanced behind  
Spartans.

Note: arrows point  
at first Division in  
each Corps.



# P3

Both sides continued to close, although the Spartan light Divisions struggled in difficult terrain, with skirmishers and missile armed troops opening fire. On the alliance left, Xavier changed plans and prepared to attack the enemy flank.

**Commagene:**  
Army advanced with horse archers shooting.

**Ethiopians:**  
Held their position but did open fire.

**Xavier:** Re-grouped cavalry for an attack sending camels forward to shoot. Infantry advanced with the phalangites.



**Lower Laconians:**  
Hoplites advanced on to the hill but lights were stuck on the crag.

**Tegeans:**  
Continued to advance.

**Spartans:** Hoplites advanced whilst lights remained in the wood.

**Messene:**  
Advanced behind Spartans.

Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

# P4

Missile fire intensified with both sides taking casualties. First melee between Xavier's cavalry and some Spartan light troops took place with the cavalry coming out on top.

**Commagene:** Continued advancing with foot archers coming into range.

**Ethiopians:** Were losing men but concentrated fire on the hoplites.

**Xavier:** Charged own cavalry into enemy that had emerged from the wood. Arabs and infantry shot at enemy.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Lower Laconians:** Hoplites continued crossing the hill. Lights descended the crag.

**Tegeans:** Closed on enemy with peltasts firing.

**Spartans:** Hoplites started to turn towards enemy infantry. One light Division chased enemy camels but were then attacked.

**Messene:** Advanced behind Spartans.



# P5

Leonidas reacted to the cavalry threat on his right flank by starting to move to counter it forcing Xavier to hold his position. Meanwhile, the Tegeans and Lower Laconians charged into melee with the phalangites and other infantry.

**Commagene:** Phalangites fought in melee whilst cavalry and archers weakened flank units.

**Ethiopians:** More men fell, including the chieftain, so pulled back.

**Xavier:** Held position with both cavalry and infantry and shot with missiles at enemy, although infantry was attacked.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Lower Laconians:** Hoplites charged phalangites whilst lights skirmished.

**Tegeans:** Charged into melee with enemy.

**Spartans:** Turned hoplites to face threat from enemy cavalry as lights fell back into wood.

**Messene:** Despite casualties morale held and stood ground.



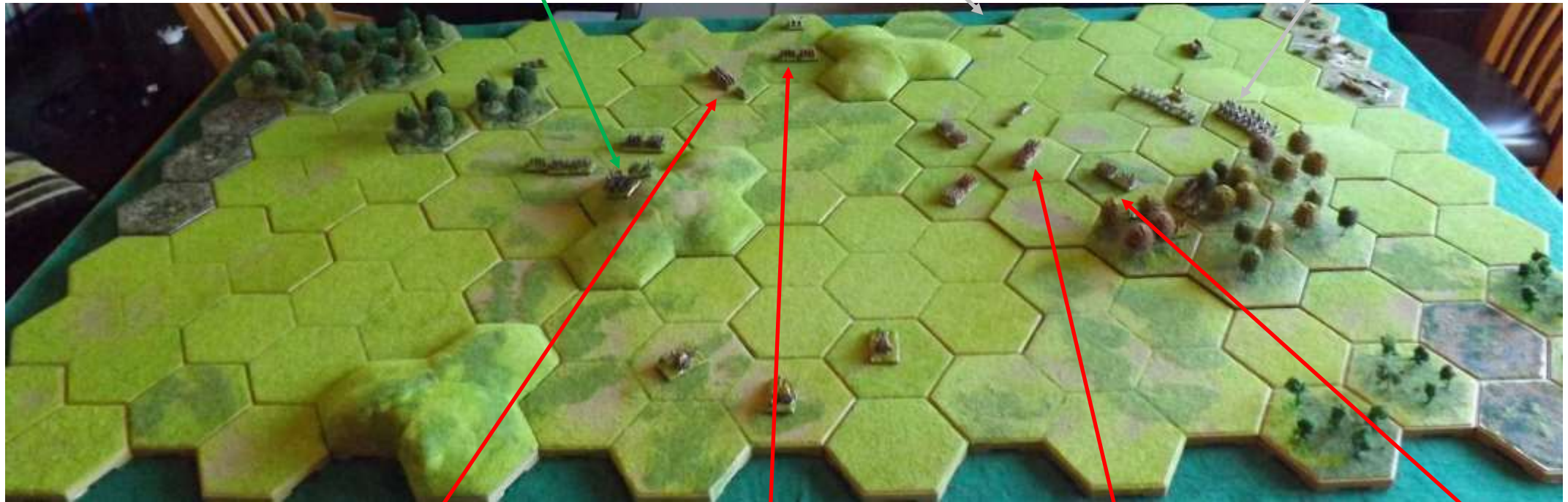
# P6

The melees had mixed results with both the Commagene and Lower Laconians losing Divisions. The Tegeans continued to pursue their opponents. Spartan pressure was starting to force Xavier's cavalry back.

**Commagene:** Had lost one phalangite Division, but re-grouped the rest to threaten enemy infantry.

**Ethiopians:** Remaining men decided to retreat.

**Xavier:** Being nearly surrounded and shot at, Xavier pulled his cavalry back. His infantry rallied back and then evaded to avoid further melee.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Lower Laconians:** Remaining hoplites moved towards Tegeans. Rest of their Corps had been destroyed.

**Tegeans:** Charged enemy infantry again.

**Spartans:** Turned Hoplites and advanced on enemy cavalry as their lights pestered the cavalry with missiles.

**Messene:** Morale rose and followed retreating cavalry.

# P7

The Tegeans finally chased their opponents off the battlefield. Antiochos lined up his men to attack them and the Lower Laconians. Meanwhile the Spartans and the Messene continued to pursue Xavier's cavalry as they retired.

**Commagene:** Formed line ready to advance on remaining enemy infantry.

**Ethiopians:** Retreated off the battlefield.

**Xavier:** Continued to withdraw with cavalry. Infantry rallied, shot and then evaded off the battlefield.



**Lower Laconians:** Pulled back to link up with the Tegeans.

**Tegeans:** Charged enemy infantry yet again.

**Spartans:** Hoplites pursued retiring cavalry with their lights still pestering with missiles.

**Messene:** Moved forward to follow retreating cavalry.

Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

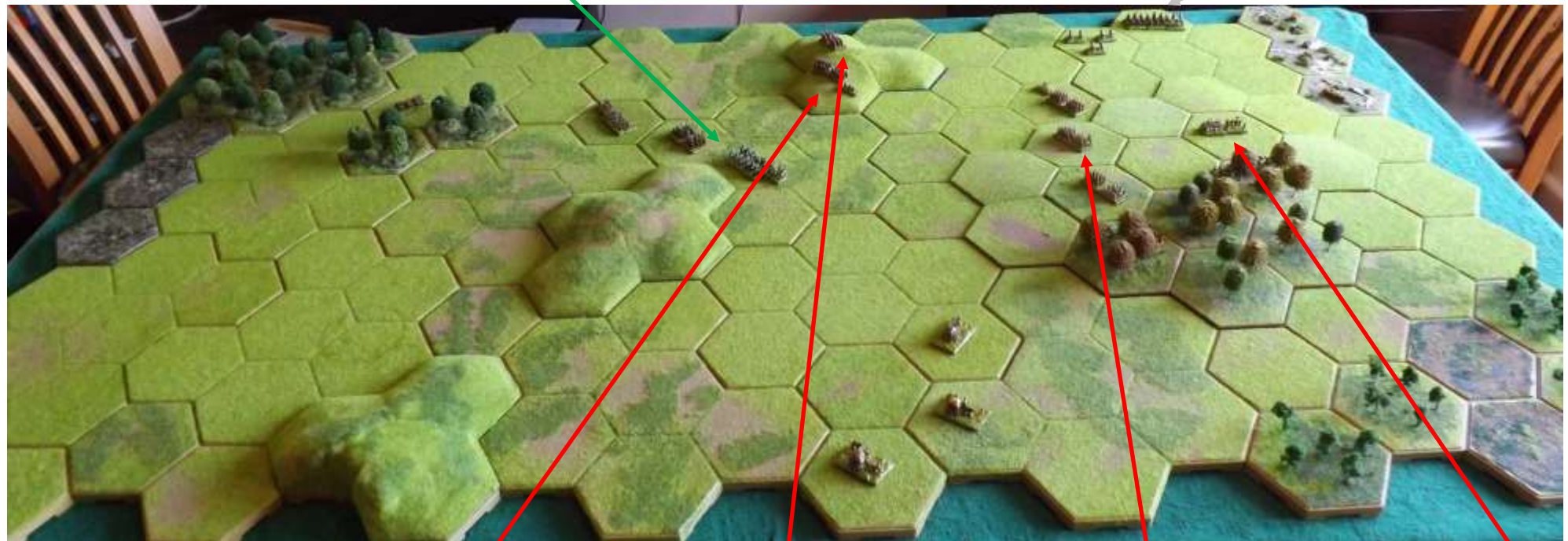


# P8

Seeing the Spartans still pursuing Xavier's cavalry, Antiochos thought he had a chance of breaking the isolated enemy on the hill before the Spartans returned towards him, but Xavier's retirement was turning into a retreat.

**Commagene:** Advanced towards isolated enemy infantry on the hill.

**Xavier:** Arab cavalry morale broke and Xavier ordered a withdrawal for his own cavalry.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Lower Laconians:** Pulled back on to the hill.

**Tegeans:** Pulled back on to the hill.

**Spartans:** Continued to pursue retiring cavalry with hoplites. Lights were delayed in the wood.

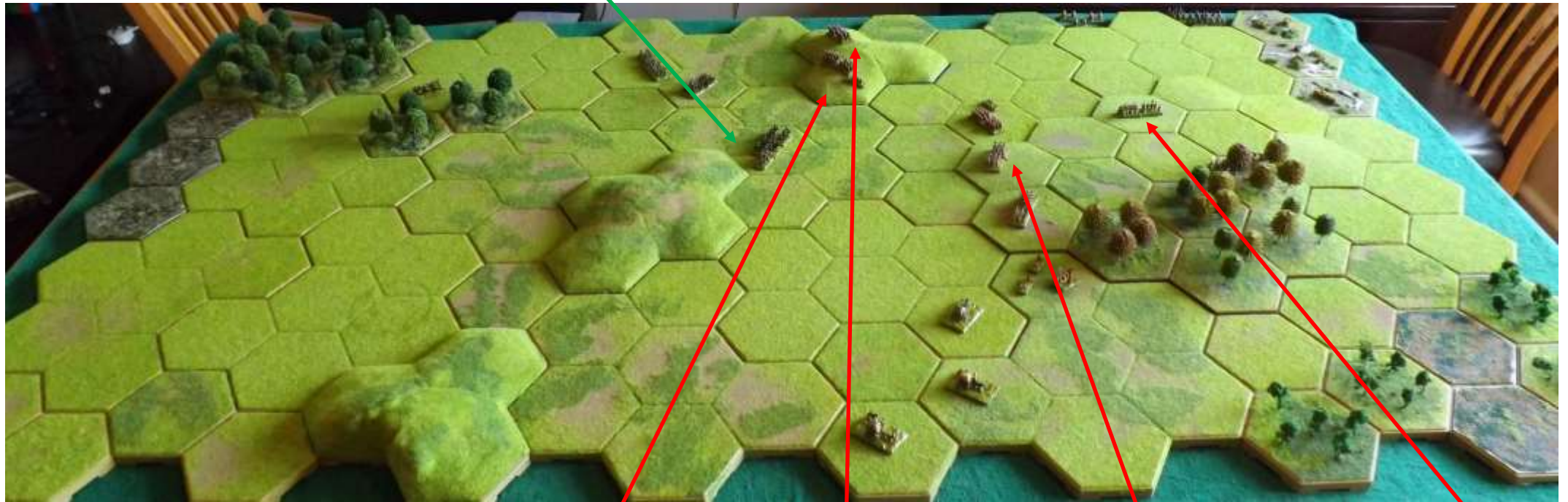
**Messene:** Continued to pursue the retreating cavalry.

# P9

The last of Xavier's troops disappeared off the battlefield allowing the Spartans and Messene to turn and head towards the Tegeans and Lower Laconians huddled on the hill. Spotting this, Antiochos started to turn to face them.

**Commagene:** Started to turn to face new threat.

**Xavier:** Cavalry retreated off the battlefield.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Lower Laconians:** Held position on the hill.

**Tegeans:** Held position on the hill.

**Spartans:** Turned hoplites and started to march towards the other flank.

**Messene:** Watched cavalry disappear and then followed Spartans.



# P10

Antiochos formed his line to face the advancing Spartans. His archers tried a few shots at the hoplites on the hill in case this was sufficient to break them.

**Commagene:** Formed line and archers fired some shots.



**Lower Laconians:** Held position on the hill.

**Tegeans:** Held position on the hill.

**Spartans:** Continued advance.

**Messene:** Followed the Spartans.

Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

# P11

The morale of the Tegeans and the Lower Laconians held and the Spartans continued to advance. Antiochos started to fall back with his remaining troops.

**Commagene:** Started to fall back.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

**Tegeans:**  
Held position on the hill.

**Lower Laconians:** Held position on the hill.

**Spartans:**  
Continued advance.

**Messene:**  
Followed the Spartans.



# And Finally

As the Spartans passed between the hills, the morale of the Tegeans and Lower Laconians improved and they too advanced. Antiochos accepted the inevitable and ordered a withdrawal, giving the Spartans a fairly conclusive victory.

Potentially the Spartans were too strong for the alliance or Antiochos needed a more reliable ally. Had the alliance had more infantry then these may have distracted the Spartans from chasing Xavier off the battlefield and given him the opportunity to shoot down the Spartan right flank. Antiochos might have held his phalangites back for longer to give his own archers and cavalry more time to weaken their opposition. As it was the full strength hoplite units proved too much for the alliance's limited infantry.

Unusually for the Spartans, Leonidas ended the battle in a fit state with a considerable portion of his force still intact.

In terms of the Most Valuable Unit award, the Spartan skirmishers – both those with the hoplites and in the light Divisions – put up a much better showing than normal. Usually they disappear like Star Trek security guards, but in this battle they hung around and did quite a lot of damage to Xavier's archers and cavalry.