ASSEMBLING THE ARMY – EARLY IMPERIAL ROMANS

The best thing about EIR armies for the gamer is that there is a massive variety of figures and manufacturers from which to choose: Gripping Beast, Imago Militis, Warlord, Magister Militum, First Corps, Wargames Foundry, Wargames Factory, Old Glory, and more. Many of these ranges are interchangeable so that figures may be purchased from more than one manufacturer to provide some extra variety. For those gamers that enjoy working with plastic figure, the majority of the army may be constructed for a low price. For those metal bugs (like me), most manufacturers offer decent army deals that can get your costs down to around £1 per figure.

In a Clash of Empires army list, the force is put together by first selecting a compulsory general and compulsory core troops (usually two units). A decent sized army for a single evening’s gaming is 2000-2500 points, though most players build their force to 3000 points to provide some variety, or some extra strength for larger games. In the EIR army, the compulsory troops are either two units of legionaries or two units of auxiliary infantry.

The core of the EIR army lies in the legionaries and/or the auxiliary infantry. Using the “Legion” unit rule enables your auxiliaries to support other auxiliaries or your legionaries to support other legionaries or auxiliaries. Choosing auxiliaries instead of legionaries for your compulsory troops adds the interesting option of painting an EIR force with no legionaries at all! But we will construct a well trained and varied 2000 point army list stationed on the Rhine with legionaries at the heart of it, so we’ll take two units of 16 and an experienced consul as the general.

Consul – Mounted on a horse
16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum
16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum

Consul – Mounted on a horse
16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum                  60 points
16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum              352 points
Upgrading the legionaries to heavy armour certainly improves their survivability but hampers their mobility, so we will leave them lightly armoured. Other core troops in the list are Veteran Legionaries and Untrained Legionaries. To keep with our theme of building an experienced force, the next core choices will be two units of auxilia, my favourite troops in the army list.

The ubiquitous auxiliary infantry are able to act in two roles but we will use them in a front line capacity, opting for closed order status and taking long spears over the more attack minded throwing spears. We will the javelin option to give them a bit of close range firepower but we won’t upgrade them to elite troops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troop Type</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins</td>
<td>252</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins</td>
<td>252</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total so far:</td>
<td>1268</td>
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12 Auxiliary Cavalry – Light Armour, Shield, Throwing Spear, Javelins 324 points
10 Auxiliary Archers – Light Armour, Composite Bow, Hand Weapon 100 points
Total so far: 1692 points

For each core unit taken, one support or skirmish choice may be selected. With a wide range of support options in the EIR army the consul is able to pick the right tools for any job, with six different cavalry units, archers, artillery and supporting marines or numeri. Against armies with many horse mounted troops the lack of cavalry can leave you with a distinct tactical disadvantage, so a unit of auxiliary cavalry is selected. This unit is specifically to guard against enemy cavalry or to exploit a tactical situation, such as attacking flanks or riding down a fleeing enemy. They can be very vulnerable in overtly offensive roles, being outclassed by some cavalry of the period, and being susceptible to missile fire, especially from skirmishers protected by terrain features. Adding javelins gives them a useful shooting option, but we won’t upgrade them to drilled troops. We will also add some missile support in the form of auxiliary archers who are able to operate as skirmishers or in close support of the infantry.

12 Auxiliary Cavalry – Light Armour, Shield, Throwing Spear, Javelins 324 points
10 Auxiliary Archers – Light Armour, Composite Bow, Hand Weapon 100 points
Total so far: 1692 points
A different way of approaching the cavalry question might be to include extra infantry held in reserve on the flanks, perhaps supported by light artillery. As the main line rolls forward, the flanking infantry stays in a position to stop enemy troops exploiting any flanks exposed during the advance. Some skirmishers are always useful, either for annoying main enemy formation, defeating opposing skirmishers, or providing some defence on the flanks. They will always be defeated by any enemy cavalry, though, so it is important to try and take advantage of terrain when these troops are deployed on your flanks. The EIR list includes slingers, javelinmen and cavalry in this section, and we will take 10 javelin-armed troops. A multitude of different models may represent these skirmishers, from Numidians to Celts to Greeks.

**10 Javelinmen – Javelins, Improvised Weapon**
*Total so far:*

With the main force chosen, it’s time to review the plan and see what else is needed. Four main line infantry units have a little missile support with skirmishers and cavalry to operate on the flanks. What’s required next is a sub-commander so we will take a mounted one to act as the commander of the cavalry.

**Tribune – Mounted on a horse**
*Total so far:*

That leaves 173 points to play with. Not enough to buy a main fighting unit, but sufficient to provide a smaller reserve infantry formation or, as we haven’t used up all of the support and skirmish choices, extra missile troops or a small unit of cavalry. It could even be spent on Ancient British, Batavian or Gallic allies. We’ll take some more of the very useful auxilia to round it off.

**12 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins**
*Total:*

So, with four main fighting units and a smaller auxiliary unit to provide support, the infantry component looks pretty tough. The bigger auxilia units deploy two deep, benefiting from the close support of the legionaries behind them. If one of the legionary cohorts is required alongside the auxilia, the smaller 12-man unit can step in to support.

A few archers provides defence against marauding cavalry or, in a defensive role, is able to sit behind the infantry and fire over their heads. The auxiliary cavalry is of a good quality for the time period, but will not fare well against really heavy enemy horse troops, such as cataphracts. The cavalry will not break the enemy but it can win the battle with a well timed pursuit. Finally, the javelinmen are well suited to harassing enemy troops attempting to gain advantage on the flank, not only through their missile fire but also through their ability to slow them down.

There are plenty of variations to the EIR army with its core of quality infantry, plethora of cavalry choice, artillery and allies. The force described above is summarised below, along with a couple of varied 2000 point armies.
### The Army

**Command**
- Consul – Mounted on a horse: 60 points
- Tribune – Mounted on a horse: 65 points

**Core**
- 16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum: 352 points
- 16 Legionaries – Light Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum: 352 points
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 252 points
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 252 points
- 12 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 168 points

**Support**
- 12 Auxiliary Cavalry – Lt Armour, Shield, Throwing Spear, Javelins: 324 points
- 10 Auxiliary Archers – Lt Armour, Composite Bow, Hand Weapon: 100 points

**Skirmish**
- 10 Javelinmen – Javelins, Improvised Weapon: 70 points

**Total:** 1995 points

### Auxiliary Army

**Command**
- Consul – Mounted on a horse: 60 points
- Tribune – on foot: 55 points

**Core**
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins, Drilled, Steady: 316 points
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins, Drilled, Steady: 316 points
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 252 points
- 16 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 252 points
- 12 Auxiliary Infantry – Light Armour, Shield, Long Spear, Javelins: 168 points

**Support**
- 12 Auxiliary Cavalry – Lt Armour, Shield, Throwing Spear, Javelins: 324 points
- 10 Auxiliary Archers – Lt Armour, Composite Bow, Hand Weapon: 100 points

**Skirmish**
- 10 Javelinmen – Javelins, Improvised Weapon: 70 points
- 12 Slingers – Slings, Improvised Weapon: 84 points

**Total:** 1997 points
**HEAVY INFANTRY ARMY**

This variant uses perhaps the smallest amount of troops with which to construct a good force. It definitely suffers from a lack of numbers, having only 56 heavy foot and no cavalry.

**Command**
- **Consul – Mounted on a horse** 60 points
- **Tribune – on foot** 55 points

**Core**
- 16 Legionaries – Heavy Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum 400 points
- 16 Legionaries – Heavy Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum 400 points
- 12 Veterans – Heavy Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum 360 points
- 12 Veterans – Heavy Armour, Large Shield, Sword, Pilum 360 points

**Support**
- 2 Scorpios 104 points
- 2 Scorpios 104 points

**Skirmish**
- 10 Javelinmen – Javelins, Improvised Weapon 70 points
- 12 Slingers – Slings, Improvised Weapon 84 points

**Total:** 1997 points

**Expanding the army**

Our games are typically 2500pts, even 3000pts, so I always have a plan to expand these forces. Naturally, legionaries and auxilia are an obvious choice, as is a second unit of horse or artillery. One of the great things about painting such armies is that you really get to know the miniatures and your painting quickens with every new unit.

Another option is to build a small allied contingent – a commander, a “main” unit and a smaller unit, perhaps of skirmishers. This can form the basis of a new army in the future. My Gallic allied contingent has now grown into three warbands, one unit of cavalry, two of skirmishers and two chieftains (with chariots and two more units on the extensive “to do” list.)