

THE PINE WOOD OF TÉVAR



By James Morris

EL CID'S FORGOTTEN BATTLE

“Let us leave words behind, and as befits brave knights settle this quarrel between us with the noble encounter of weapons.”¹

- Rodrigo Díaz to the Count of Barcelona

The Spanish warlord El Cid is best known as a slayer of Moors, immortalized in the 1961 movie by the compelling image of Charlton Heston riding down hordes of black-clad Almoravids outside the walls of Valencia. However, El Cid also spent a substantial amount of his violent career fighting other Christians. In fact, his least-known battle was an affair that involved two Christian armies fighting it out in the woods of Catalonia. In the incident dubbed ‘The Pine Wood of Tévar’, El Cid won a battle against the odds and laid the foundations of what would become his own private kingdom of Valencia.

I'd been planning to refight ‘The Pine Wood of Tévar’ ever since I came across the descriptions of it while researching the *El Cid Warhammer Ancient Battles* (WAB) supplement ten years ago. My miniature collection already included the personal army of El Cid himself, but the idea really began to take shape when fellow gamer Andy Hawes started work on an Aragonese/Catalan army for the period using the Perry Miniatures' First Crusade range. We agreed to refight the battle as a demo game at The Other Partizan show in September 2010, and when the second edition of WAB finally appeared last spring, this was all that was needed to spur us into action.

HISTORIA RODERICI

Although he was not a crowned king, ‘El Cid’ (real name: Rodrigo Díaz de

Vivar) was a key figure in eleventh century Spain, and this is borne out by an extraordinary biography of the man and his deeds. Probably written within fifty years of his death, the *Historia Roderici* recounts ‘the descent of that most noble and warlike man, Rodrigo Díaz, and the battles heroically fought by him.’ Although there are areas of inconsistency in the *Historia*, it still provides a vivid and compelling picture of Rodrigo's life of warfare in the Spain of nearly a thousand years ago. In sharp contrast to the one-line chronicle entries that are our best references for many

medieval battles, The Pine Wood of Tévar is covered by several chapters of build-up, including letters written by the commanders challenging each other to battle, a detailed account of the terrain and the fighting itself, and the aftermath. So what does it tell us?

THE ORIGINS OF CONFLICT

The eastern coast of Spain was, in this period, a patchwork of Muslim and Christian states. The wealthy Muslim kingdoms, known as *taifas*, were in decline: factional politics, rivalry and



Illustration by Angus McBride from *Men-At-Arms 200 El Cid and the Reconquista 1050-1492*, © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com



Above: *El Cid's army riding out from camp, ready to fight off the Catalans. Figures mainly by Gripping Beast.*

corruption were taking their toll. By contrast, the Christian states of the north were in the ascendant. Militarily powerful, they made their Muslim neighbours into client kingdoms, forcing them to pay tribute in return for military assistance and protection, memorably once described by historian Angus MacKay as a 'protection racket.'²

Having been exiled from his homeland of León and Castile in 1089, Rodrigo had moved his army south into one of the Muslim taifa kingdoms: he was effectively squatting on the lands of al-Hayib, King of Lérida and Tortosa. However, Rodrigo was no ordinary squatter; his private army of perhaps several thousand men raided the area, living off the land, and he extorted tributes from both al-Hayib and al-Qadir, the King of Valencia. This was particularly troublesome for Berenguer, the Count of Barcelona; Lérida, Valencia and Tortosa were his tributaries and paid tribute to him, not some upstart warlord! Not only that, but the bond between vassal and lord meant that al-Hayib and al-Qadir had a right to expect protection by Berenguer. Added to his previous humiliation by Rodrigo in 1082 (when he was defeated and ransomed while Rodrigo was leading Zaragoza's army), there was little doubt that the Count of Barcelona would act. And act he did. Berenguer sought allies from every neighbouring kingdom, but

to no avail: King Alfonso VI of León-Castile, who had exiled Rodrigo in the first place, had his hands full elsewhere in his extensive empire; King Sancho of Aragon would not take part; and the Muslim Amir of Zaragoza flattered both sides, but wisely declined to send soldiers to fight his onetime ally. Even so, the *Historia Roderici* tells us that Berenguer summoned 'an immense army' with several noted Catalan commanders and rode out to bring Rodrigo to heel.

THE BATTLE

Tipped off by his Muslim ally, al-Musta'in of Zaragoza, Rodrigo decided to move his army into the mountains, where he might be better able to defend himself. Berenguer's army camped nearby, whereupon the two leaders exchanged an extraordinary series of letters: threatening, insulting and goading each other to battle. Here are just a few choice excerpts from both sides:

"You scorned and gravely insulted [us] and moved us to great frenzy."

"God who is mighty will avenge such injuries you have shown us"

"We abstain from mocking you and your followers with such despicable insults."

"Yet another and worse insult and scorn you have inflicted on us, when you likened us to our wives."

"We shall not withdraw nor depart until you have come into my hands either dead or a captive in chains."

"I revile you and your men."

"If you refuse to come to [fight] me, all men will think the better of me."

Fortunately, this eleventh-century playground spat was brought to a close by El Cid, who concluded his letter with the following challenge:

"Let us leave words behind, and as befits brave knights settle this quarrel between us with the noble encounter of weapons."³



MEDIEVAL
1000AD - 1500AD



Above: Berenguer's crossbowmen sneak along the cliff top, with a bird's-eye view of Rodrigo's camp. Most tents by Magister Militum; camp followers by various manufacturers, including Black Tree, Gripping Beast, Hovels and Crusader Miniatures.

Both armies now prepared for the inevitable clash of arms, but it appears that Rodrigo was, uncharacteristically, caught napping. His camp was, according to the *Historia Roderici*, on flat ground at the foot of a large hill. Berenguer 'sent some soldiers under cover of night to climb and take possession of the high ground... Their plan was to attack Rodrigo's position from above.'⁴ In his classic work, *The Cid and His Spain* (originally published in Spain as *La España del Cid*), the famous Spanish historian Ramón Menéndez Pidal put forward a more complex sequence of events, including

Below: The view of the battlefield from behind El Cid's lines. A party of spearmen (right) are sent out to counter the Catalan rear attack.

Rodrigo sending out ambushers of his own to foil the Count of Barcelona's plans, and mock 'deserters' to feed him false information. However, there appears to be no other evidence for this, and the most likely explanation is that - for once - the famous warlord was simply caught unawares.

In any case, it did not change the end result. At dawn, 'the count and his armed men surrounded Rodrigo's encampment and fell upon it with much shouting.'⁵ Rodrigo and his men armed themselves and, we are told, 'charged fiercely against the count's formation and with this first

charge shifted and broke it.'⁶ Here we see, once again, the formidable warrior in action, though it nearly cost him his life: 'while fighting valiantly, Rodrigo fell from his horse and was immediately struck and wounded on the ground.'⁷ This could well have been the end of the battle - and indeed, many armies of the era would have broken at this point - but El Cid's men were hardened warriors who had chosen to stay with him in exile. It is also possible that the wound was not too severe, as we know that Rodrigo was back on his feet a few days later. In any case, his men were clearly prepared to fight on. 'His soldiers did not give up the



fight; they battled on courageously until they had defeated and bravely overcome the count and all his army.⁸ The future El Cid had not just had a lucky escape; he had turned a potential disaster into a crushing victory.

AFTERMATH

It is fair to say that, for all his martial prowess and charismatic leadership, Rodrigo Díaz also had more than his fair share of luck. Having survived the wound suffered during the battle, he was able to take charge of its aftermath, albeit sat on a chair in his tent. It seems that nearly all of the leading Catalan commanders had surrendered, realizing that a humiliating ransom would be preferable to death. The *Historia Roderici* states that an 'innumerable multitude' of the enemy was killed and 5000 taken prisoner⁹, although, as usual with sources of this period, it is important not to take the casualty figures too seriously! What is clear is that all commanders of note were taken prisoner, along with their men, who had no reason to risk their lives once their lords had surrendered.

Chief amongst the captives were the Count of Barcelona and Guerau Alemany de Cervello, a powerful Catalan noble. While initially hostile towards Berenguer (and still suffering from the wound received in the battle), Rodrigo soon recovered his senses and negotiated a ransom deal with his prisoners. Berenguer and Giraldo were allowed to return to their lands in return for the enormous payment of '80,000 gold marks of Valencia.'¹⁰ Again, while this exact sum may be an exaggeration, these two powerful magnates were clearly willing and able to pay for their lives. As was the custom of the time, not all of this ransom would be paid at once; we are also told that 'children and relatives'¹¹ were sent as hostages. The other captives also made similar (if cheaper) deals and soon Rodrigo was a very wealthy man indeed. Those soldiers who had stayed with him during the hard winter of 1089-90 were amply rewarded for their loyalty during exile; added to the loot taken from the Count of Barcelona's camp, the Cid and his men were set up for the next stage of their campaign.

The victory in the Pine Wood of Tévar had immediate consequences: first, it cemented Rodrigo's reputation as a warlord - all of eastern and central Spain would have heard of how he had defeated the mighty Count of Barcelona not once, but twice. Secondly, it refilled his coffers with booty and ransoms, which meant that he had the means to retain and reward soldiers in his private army.

THE HISTORIA RODERICI

How do we know so much about this particular battle? The answer can be found in a uniquely medieval Spanish document. *The Historia Roderici* ('History of Rodrigo') is highly unusual, not because it gives a biography of the life and deeds of a famous person, but because Rodrigo Díaz was neither a saint nor a king (the only people who would usually merit a work of this type in this era.) It is generally agreed to have been composed at some point in the twelfth century, perhaps even by someone who had spoken to El Cid's followers or had access to his records. In any case, it provides a vibrant and exciting insight into the life and career of an eleventh-Century Spanish warlord.

Fortunately for English-speakers, a very readable translation of the *Historia Roderici* is available in paperback. *The World of El Cid - Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (ISBN 0 7190 52262) is highly recommended for anyone looking into this remarkable period of Spanish history. The book, which also

includes three other important chronicles of the period, is translated and annotated by Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher (author of the excellent *The Quest for El Cid*). The annotations include a treasure trove of useful notes to help explain who was doing what and when!



But there was also a third and final consequence which had the furthest-reaching effects of all. A few months later, while their lord was recovering from a serious illness - perhaps caused by his wound at Tévar - Rodrigo's ambassadors came across the Count of Barcelona at the court of Zaragoza. There then followed a lengthy diplomatic exchange which resulted in the two men sealing what could be loosely called a 'peace agreement'; as Rodrigo's chronicler tells us, 'Peace and friendship between the two of them was publicly and amicably proclaimed.' This so-called peace deal involved Berenguer handing over 'that part of Hispania which was subject to his overlordship.'¹² In other words, Rodrigo was after his own

lands; he had proven that Berenguer could neither protect his tributary states nor defend them in battle, so he would have them instead. Rodrigo Díaz was now nominally overlord of the Muslim kingdoms of the Spanish east coast, and this would, in the summer of 1094, lead him to his most enduring and famous conquest - the great city of Valencia.

Quotations and references

1 and 3-12 are all taken from S. Barton and R. Fletcher's translation of *Historia Roderici*, included in *The World of El Cid* (see sidebar.)

2 Angus MacKay, quoted by Richard Fletcher in *The Quest for El Cid* (Hutchinson, 1988)

Below: At the head of his men, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (right) clashes with Berenguer of Barcelona (left).



WARGAMING THE BATTLE & SCENARIO

WARGAMING THE BATTLE

We played the battle using the *Warhammer Ancient Battles* rules, though any suitable Medieval rules would do just fine (*DBMM*, *Days of Knights* etc). Your chosen rules set will need to be able to cope with single combats and capturing enemy leaders for ransom, though you can improvise rules for these fairly easily.

ARMIES

We chose two forces taken from the Christian Spanish army lists in the *Warhammer Ancient Battles* supplement *El Cid*, with a few modifications. Both armies were roughly 2200 points in value, but the key features (if you are adapting this for another rules set) were:

- El Cid needs to be the best leader and warrior on the field (see below.)
- El Cid's men need to be more battle-hardened than the Count of Barcelona's men - we achieved this by allowing some units and characters the Veteran ability, and also by choosing better quality troops, e.g. Andalusian noble

cavalry, guard spearmen and Basque javelinmen. Essentially, El Cid's army should be smaller but more experienced than Berenguer's.

- Both armies should be largely composed of mounted knights and jinetes (light horsemen).

THE ARMY OF RODRIGO DÍAZ

Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid (200 points)

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
El Cid	7	6	5	4	4	3	7	4	9

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Army General, Veteran (may re-roll all to hit dice in melee once per game), Leadership range 15" (rather than the usual 12"). If you have the WAB *El Cid* supplement, you may have noticed that we have reduced El Cid's Weapon Skill (WS) from 7 to 6 - this was because he was just a bit too hard otherwise! He needs to be the best warrior out there, but Berenguer has to have half a chance of beating him!

Pedro Bermúdez, standard bearer (Armiger) (100 points)

Equipment: sword, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Army Standard Bearer with a range of 15" (rather than usual 12"), Veteran.

Alvar Fáñez (Infante)

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Veteran.

Martín Antolínez (Infante)

Equipment: sword, throwing spear, light armour and shield.

Special Rules: Veteran. Martin is equipped to lead a unit of Jinetes.

Below: El Cid comes out fighting with a mounted charge.



Rodrigo Díaz, the man himself.





Above: *The knights of Castile (by Gripping Beast, bottom) and Catalonia (Perry Miniatures, bottom) duke it out.*

Two units of 10 Caballeros Hidalgos (noble knights), each with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.
Special Rules: Ferocious (First) Charge; may count up to +1 rank bonus in combat.
 One unit of knights (El Cid's personal guard) may be Veteran.

Two units of 9 Jinetes (light horsemen), each with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: sword, throwing spear, javelins and shield.
Special Rules: Feigned Flight. Light cavalry.

10 Ballesteros (crossbowmen), with Leader

Equipment: Hand weapons, crossbow, light armour.
Special Rules: Light infantry.

18 Guard Spearmen, with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: Thrusting spear, shield, light armour, javelins.
Special Rules: Stubborn.

10 Basque Javelinmen, with Leader

Equipment: Hand weapons, shields, javelins, throwing spears.
Special Rules: Skirmishers, Feigned Flight, Aliados Y Mercenarios.

10 Peones (infantry spearmen), with Leader

Equipment: Hand weapons, shields, javelins, throwing spears.
Special Rules: Light infantry.

10 allied Andalusian Noble Cavalry, with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: Hand weapons, light armour and shield, throwing spear and javelins.
Special Rules: Andalusian Horsemen. Feigned Flight. Aliados Y Mercenarios.

12 allied Andalusian Archers

Equipment: Hand weapons, bow.
Special Rules: Light infantry. Aliados Y Mercenarios.

GAMING EL CID USING WAB 2.0

The long-awaited release of the second edition of *Warhammer Ancient Battles* has generated a lot of internet gossip, but how has it affected El Cid gamers? Overall, it gives a much better game, with cavalry having more maneuverability (great for the knights and jinetes of the Reconquista); foot soldiers are not ignored, with the new 'close order' rank bonus being very handy for the Almoravids and meaning that infantry can be deployed in more realistic, longer and thinner fighting lines. The new 'open order' rules for light troops are possibly the biggest single change, but they do mean that players now have to choose whether to field their light troops as skirmishers or formed units, which adds a new level of tactics to the game. The only troops immune to this ruling are the Andalusian horsemen, who can switch between skirmishing and formed at will (see the website below for more details.)

The downgrading of the much-reviled 'musician roll off' and its improvement with the new 'Momentum' rule has been welcomed by everyone I have played with. Also slightly downgraded have been the Ferocious Charge rule for knights (now limited to breaking a single formed unit, to simulate blown horses and broken lances), and crossbows now have less hitting power at long range, a welcome amendment.

Following the release of the WAB 2.0 rules, some errata and notes were compiled to help players use the existing supplements with the new rules. You can find these to download at: <http://warhammer-historical.com/PDF/WAB2superrata.pdf>

Below: *Ducking and diving with the light horsemen: El Cid's Christian Jinetes face off against Berenguer's reluctant Moorish allies.*





Berenguer Ramon, Count of Barcelona, painted by Andy Hawes.

THE ARMY OF THE COUNT OF BARCELONA

Berenguer Ramon, Count of Barcelona (Rey)

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Army General.

Dorca de Castelvell, standard bearer (Armiger)

Equipment: sword, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Army Standard Bearer.

Guerau Alemany de Cervello (Infante)

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Deudonat Bernat de Claramunt (Infante)

Equipment: sword, throwing spear, light armour and shield.

Special Rules: Deudonat Bernat is equipped to lead a unit of Jinetes.

One unit of 12 and one of 11 Caballeros Hidalgos (noble knights), each with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: sword, thrusting spear, heavy armour and shield, warhorse.

Special Rules: Ferocious (First) Charge; may count up to +1 rank bonus in combat.



10 Jinetes (light horsemen), with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: sword, throwing spear, javelins and shield.

Special Rules: Feigned Flight. Light cavalry.

10 Ballesteros (crossbowmen)

Equipment: Hand weapons, crossbow, light armour.

Special Rules: Light infantry.

10 Skirmishers (archers)

Equipment: Hand weapons, short bow.

Special Rules: Skirmishers.

24 Peones and 10 Arqueros (combined unit of 24 infantry spearmen + 10 archers), with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: Hand weapons, shields, javelins, thrusting spears. Archers have hand weapons and bows only.

Special Rules: Combined formation.

10 allied Andalusian Jinetes, with Leader, Standard and Musician

Equipment: Hand weapons, shield, throwing spear and javelins.

Special Rules: Andalusian Horsemen. Feigned Flight. Aliados Y Mercenarios.

Below: A view from Berenguer's lines of the author's scratch-built terrain; trees are by Last Valley.

TERRAIN

According to the *Historia Roderici*, 'Rodrigo's camp had a high mountain rising above it...his tents were pitched below this mountain.' We had a rocky hillside made of cork bark available, but you could use any hill and/or rocks. The face of the hill is impassable, but infantry models in skirmish order may climb up the sides as very difficult terrain.

Underneath the hillside should be the camp, which is not really used to fight over, but is a tempting objective for the Count of Barcelona's men. Our camp was mostly composed of tents by Magister Militum and a huge variety of camp followers from different manufacturers.

We surrounded the rocky hillside with trees to give the impression of the edge of the forest, and also placed a couple of patches of woods to break up the edges of the main gaming area, but most of the battlefield in front of El Cid's camp should be a flat plain, ideal for cavalry charges!

Our table measured about 10x6 feet, but the actual gaming area in front of the hill was more like 8x6 feet. We found that playing down the length of such a deep table was ideal for flowing cavalry combats, which saw units break, flee, rally and turn around to fight again up virtually the whole length of the battlefield!





Above: Berenguer's spearmen close in on the camp, now protected by only a handful of Rodrigo's crossbowmen.

DEPLOYMENT & SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

- The Count of Barcelona deploys his whole army first, but keeping up to three foot units in ambush (see below).
- El Cid then deploys his entire force, within 12" of his camp. None of his units may be placed on the hilltop.

- The Count of Barcelona may now deploy up to three foot units in ambush; one unit may be placed emerging from the woods at the bottom of the slope, and the others along the hilltop.
- The Count of Barcelona now takes the first turn.

- When an enemy character is 'killed' in close combat, dice to see if he has been taken alive for ransom. (The ransom rules in the *El Cid* WAB supplement are simple: roll a D6; 1-2 = dead, 3-6 = taken alive for ransom.)

Below: A panoramic shot showing Rodrigo's camp about to fall to the Catalans. The cliffs are created from cork bark, faced onto a Styrofoam hillside.





Above: The last guards fled, and Berenguer's horsemen rush to get in on the rich pickings of the camp!

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The primary objective for both sides is to kill, or better, capture, the enemy's general.

Secondary objectives are to capture enemy characters. Berenguer can also win additional bragging rights by taking possession of El Cid's camp.

THE REFIGHT

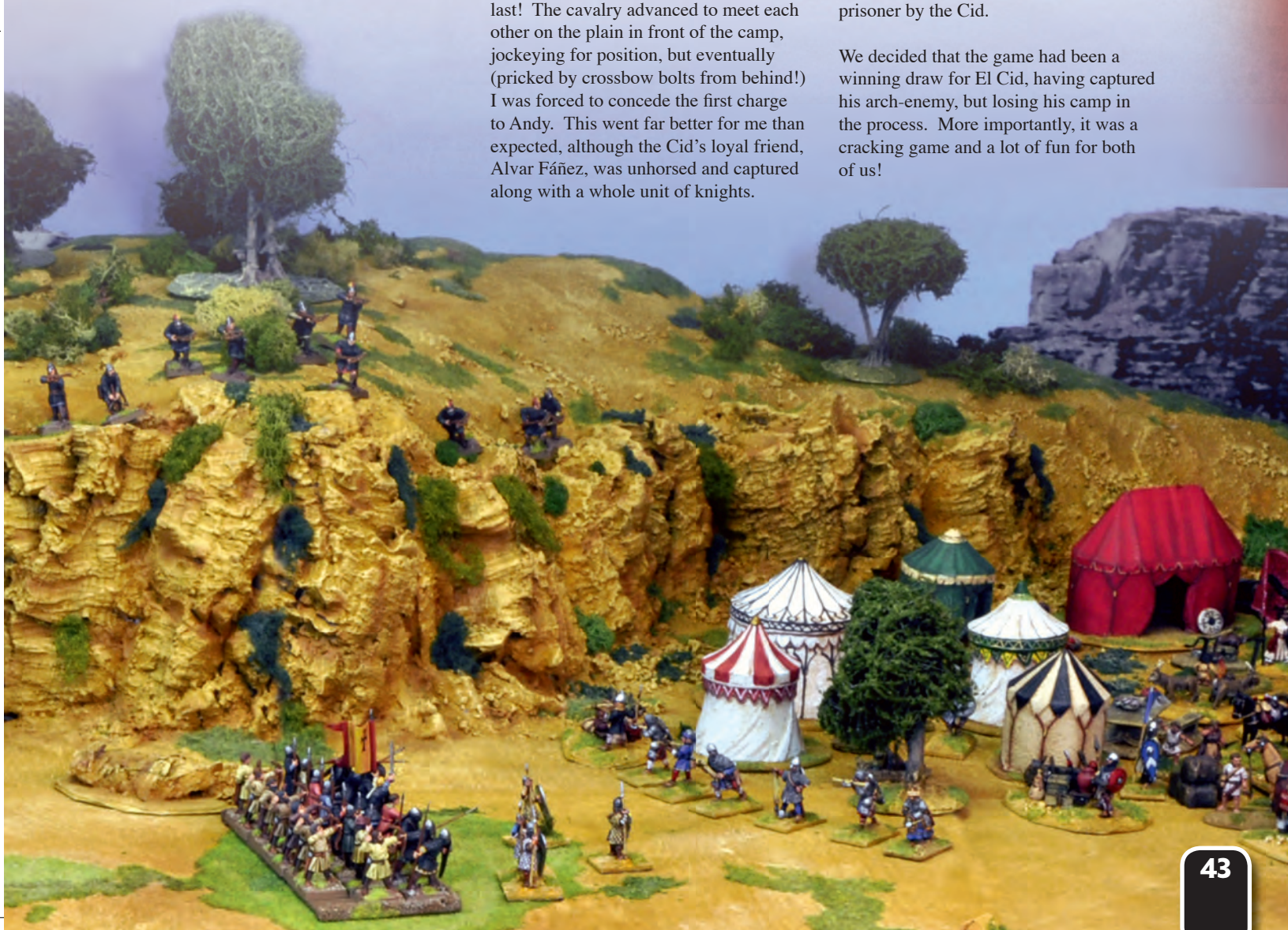
True to the Count of Barcelona's cunning plan, Andy sent his crossbowmen, archers and a large unit of spearmen up the hill to ambush the unsuspecting El Cid (played by myself), who awoke to a rude hail of missiles - fortunately my saving throws were good, but it wasn't going to last! The cavalry advanced to meet each other on the plain in front of the camp, jockeying for position, but eventually (pricked by crossbow bolts from behind!) I was forced to concede the first charge to Andy. This went far better for me than expected, although the Cid's loyal friend, Alvar Fáñez, was unhorsed and captured along with a whole unit of knights.

Fortunately, Berenguer's allies weren't quite so effective, and his Andalusian jinetes kept refusing to join the battle. With some fortunate dice rolling, El Cid and his retinue beat off Berenguer and his men, starting a running battle that was to last all day. My Andalusian allies (clearly better paid and motivated) advanced up Berenguer's flank and made mincemeat of his light cavalry.

If it was all going to plan up front, the situation in the camp was becoming dire. Berenguer's men had peppered my defending troops with arrows and ignominiously driven off my best unit of guard spearmen with lowly peones! The hail of missiles also caught out the unfortunate Martín Antolínez, who got separated from his unit of jinetes and foolishly fled within range of two dozen enemy archers and crossbowmen, with fatal results... now El Cid had to deliver to ensure any kind of victory.

Fortunately, he did just that. The epic running battle raged the length of the table, with El Cid charging Berenguer's bodyguards, breaking them, but each time failing to catch them. Berenguer duly rallied and fought back, though eventually his 14-man unit was whittled down to just a handful of knights that scattered, leaving their leader to be taken prisoner by the Cid.

We decided that the game had been a winning draw for El Cid, having captured his arch-enemy, but losing his camp in the process. More importantly, it was a cracking game and a lot of fun for both of us!



GUERAU ALEMANY DE CERVÉLLO

Guerau Alemany, also known as Giraldo Aleman, was probably the second most important leader in the Catalan army – historian Richard Fletcher has estimated that his ransom was set at around 20,000 gold pieces. This is another model from the Perry Knights attacking with swords pack. He has had a greenstuff tunic added beneath his armour – Moorish robes were both fashionable and practical garb in medieval Spain – and his horse has had tasselled decoration added. Guerau's kite shield is decorated with a design inspired by another Angus McBride illustration from the Osprey 'Elite' book, *The Normans*.



Model by Perry Miniatures, painted by Andy Hawes.



Above: Andy Hawes' knights on the charge - note the yellow and red themed banners and colour scheme.

EL CID

Although we happily refer to the greatest warrior of his age as 'El Cid', Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar was probably not known by this title in his lifetime, but more likely as 'Campeador', (which very loosely translates as 'Leader/Teacher of Battle'). A born leader and noted winner of single combats, he had cut his teeth in the wars between Castile, León and Aragon in the 1060s. Despite (or, in fact, as a result of) his successes, Rodrigo had made enemies, and the year 1089 found him exiled from the court of León & Castile. With his followers – a sizeable private army perhaps numbering a few thousand – he made his base in the mountainous region of Morella, supporting themselves by raiding the surrounding lands and forcing payment of tribute. It was this action that brought Rodrigo Díaz into conflict with Berenguer a second time.

Sculpted by Mark Copplestone, this figure was originally commissioned by Amazon Miniatures as a promotional giveaway model for the *El Cid* WAB supplement in 2003. As I already own two other painted El Cids, I'd had this one tucked away in the bits box for ages; however, when I saw the quality of the characters that Andy was producing, I just had to get this one painted up to try and match his high standards! Sometimes a little friendly competition helps to get that project finished...

The figure is an unashamed depiction of Charlton Heston in all his Hollywood finery, perhaps more suitable for the thirteenth rather than the eleventh century. I decided to go with the red-and-white colour scheme suggested in the movie, using Citadel colours Blood Red and Foundation Mechrite Red as my base reds – the latter covers particularly well over a black undercoat. In order to make my heroes stand out on the gaming table, I based them on large oval bases – these are the Oval Magnetic Bike Bases from the Gale Force Nine range. The basing colour is Rowney Acrylic Yellow Ochre, which really contrasts well against the figure.



Model by Amazon Miniatures, painted by the author.





Above: El Cid and his decimated bodyguard prepare to put the surviving Catalan knights to flight.

PEDRO BERMÚDEZ

Pedro Bermúdez appears in the later romances as El Cid's standard bearer, boldly carrying his banner through thick and thin, willing to fight and die for his lord. The style of many of the standards used in the Hollywood film is more suitable for the high medieval period than the 1090s, but I wanted to emulate this look for my command group. Therefore, I used a couple of Northstar 100mm metal spears to make a tall banner pole; having cut the second pole to length, I bound it tightly to the main banner staff with cotton thread, sealed it with superglue, and cut the loose ends off when it had dried.

More problematic was finding a suitable design for the banner itself. Sadly, we have only a single, unreliable reference to any form of symbol or heraldry used by Rodrigo Díaz, which tells us that he had a golden shield. The El Cid movie added a dragon to this shield, which seemed quite an appropriate emblem for such a rapacious warlord, so I decided to head down this route.

However, a search of my books on the period didn't turn up anything suitable, so I resorted to the internet. The problem with Googling images for 'dragons' is that a huge number of the results are very modern depictions of these mythical creatures; I was after something that looked more like it had been dreamt up by a medieval monk or mason! At this point I remembered that the patron saint of Catalonia is Saint George, and that I had seen many depictions of the saint slaying the dragon while on holiday there a few years ago. Trying 'Catalan dragons' in the search engine turned up much better results, and I plumped for a stone carving of St George and the Dragon that a tourist had snapped in Barcelona; I'm not sure how authentic it was, but it looked right, so I got to work re-drawing the dragon image using old-fashioned pencil and paper. This done, I scanned the image into my PC, reduced it and copied it to the exact dimensions for the banner - my wife may have been worrying about my sanity after six trial print runs, but I hadn't done this much research to botch the end result! [If you don't want to go to all this effort, the editor has kindly agreed to print the results of my hard work here so you can make your own.]



Happy with the blank banner, I again used El Cid's base colour scheme of red and white. The golden dragon was undercoated in a very dark brown (Citadel Colour Scorched Brown) and then built up with successive layers of copper, gold and eventually white acrylic. Gold thread or cloth would have been an extortionately expensive item in the eleventh century, but I felt that it was justified in this case!

I deliberately picked a fairly plain model for Pedro, as I wanted the banner to be the main focus of the figure. It's an Artizan Andalusian equipped with the latest eleventh-century military equipment - a kite shield and an unusual type of helmet incorporating a face guard (I have often felt that these were more prevalent in Spain due to the high number of missile weapons in use in the Peninsula.) The shield has a cross-hatched design, also seen in the El Cid movie. When placing Pedro side-by-side with the ultra-heroic El Cid model, I found that his realistically-proportioned horse didn't quite match up to his leader's! This led to a frantic search through the bits box for a suitably large and dynamic mount, which I found in the form of a West Wind Arthurian horse. With a saddlecloth made from greenstuff, Pedro fitted onto his new steed just fine, and then it was on to the other heroes...



Model by Artizan Miniatures, painted by the author.

WARGAMES
illustrated.net

Check out the website where you will find more photos from the game and a downloadable copy of the above flag.

THE COUNT OF BARCELONA

Berenguer Ramon II was the Count of Barcelona, the powerful ruler of an area covering much of today's region of Catalonia. Despite his noble status, his reputation had been tarnished by the persistent rumour that he had killed his brother Ramon in 1082, for which he received the epithet 'Berenguer the Fratricide'. Berenguer also had a history of bad blood with Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, going back at least eight years previously, when the Cid had defeated the Count in battle while leading the army of the Moorish Kingdom of Zaragoza. It was perhaps Berenguer's misfortune that he had occasion to cross swords with the greatest warrior of the age not once, but twice.

For the Count of Barcelona, Andy chose a leader model from the Perry Crusader mounted command pack. The horse has had its rear legs slightly repositioned to give the impression of rearing up in suitably 'heroic' fashion. The Count's sword arm has also been adjusted to suggest a sweeping gesture of command, with the join being concealed with a small quantity of greenstuff modeling putty.

As with many of the caballeros and characters in this army, Andy has used even more green stuff to add 'Spanish' touches to the models to individualise them and to make them look less like generic Norman knights. On this model, he has sculpted a tunic extending beneath the armour and has added a sash around the Count's waist. Tassels - an ever-popular accoutrement for the proud horsemen of España - have also been added to the horse's trappings.

The Count's helmet and shield have been painted using the key colours that tie the whole army together. In homage to Spanish tradition, Andy has adopted red and yellow for the army's theme. However, he has deliberately chosen shades that are less 'stark' than the usual scarlet and bright golden yellow, preferring instead to use Foundry Madder Red and Yellow Ochre (the latter applied on a base of Citadel Colour Bestial Brown) which give a more earthy, natural hue. The complex hand-painted shield design on the shield was inspired by the Angus McBride illustration of Ahmad Sayf al-Dawla in the Osprey 'Men at Arms' book, *El Cid and the Reconquista*.

Finally, as with all the characters in Andy's medieval and dark age WAB armies, the model has been mounted on a 40mm round base to make it well and truly stand out from the rank and file!



Model by Perry Miniatures, painted by Andy Hawes.

DORCA DE CASTELVELL, BERENGUER'S STANDARD BEARER

Deudonat Bernat de Claramunt was another of Berenguer's leaders with extensive military experience - he had recently been given the task of resettling and defending the important coastal town of Tarragona.

This is a model from the Perry Miniatures pack CU5 Knights attacking with swords. He has had the sword removed and a banner pole added. This was made from a Foundry steel spear with a cross-piece made from a Gripping Beast spear (these are slightly thinner than the Foundry ones and are ideal for cross-pieces.) This was attached to the upright with superglue and the join was secured by a blob of greenstuff scored with a craft knife to simulate knotted rope. Round shields remained very common in Christian Spanish armies long after they had fallen out of favour with knights across the remainder of Western Europe, so Andy switched the kite shield supplied with the model for a circular one to give it a more Hispanic feel. It is for this same reason that many of the caballeros in Andy's army have round shields, as it then becomes more obvious that these are not simply generic Norman or Crusading knights. Little touches like this lend an air of authenticity to a wargames army and also help to personalize it for its owner, as well as making it more interesting for the viewing public when the army is on display during a demonstration game.

The banner, like all of the flags in Andy's medieval and dark ages armies, was hand-drawn and painted onto a piece of standard white paper. The banner is then creased prior to varnishing, as this helps to strengthen the folds and adds durability to what, after all, is just a piece of paper with a lot of work put into it! This design has been borrowed from the colour plate of the 13th century chess-playing Aragonese knight from the Osprey book - simply because Andy liked it and wanted to avoid the army banner being just the traditional red-and-yellow stripes of Catalonia so often seen in Spanish wargame armies (although one of the caballeros units has this traditional banner - it had to be in there somewhere!) As this is the army standard, Andy has opted for gold decoration on the banner border (using Citadel Colour Shining Gold). Foundry's Madder Red and Yellow Ochre have also been used to tie the banner into the colour scheme of the army.



Model by Perry Miniatures, painted by Andy Hawes.

ALVAR FÁÑEZ

Alvar Fáñez appears in the various romances of El Cid as his right-hand man, although in real life it appears that he returned to the service of his lord, Alfonso VI of León and Castile. Nevertheless, he is supposed to be such a stalwart companion of El Cid (think Little John and Robin Hood) that it seemed only right to have him depicted on the table. This model is another Artizan Andalusian, but the heavy armour and noble pose seemed ideal for a hero of Fáñez's stature. The horse again came from the bits box - I think it's an old Foundry model sculpted, appropriately enough, by Mark Copplestone. Another greenstuff saddle blanket and a fancy paint job and Alvar Fáñez was ready to take to the field!

Rider by Artizan Miniatures, painted by the author.



MARTÍN ANTOLÍNEZ

Needing a final hero to make up the foursome meant some digging around in various El Cid books to find likely candidates; useful as the *Historia Roderici* is, it gives more details of Rodrigo's enemies than his associates! My copy of *The Poem of the Cid* - admittedly a later romance containing at least as much fiction as fact - provided me with several potential heroes, from which I chose Martín Antolínez. Antolínez is referred to as 'a loyal man of Burgos' (El Cid's home town) and seemed to fit the bill. The model is another Artizan Moor, which I felt looked the part for a Christian who had spent much of his time 'going native' in Muslim taifa states.



Rider by Artizan Miniatures, painted by the author.



Left: Berenguer's other unit of knights sends Alvar Fanez packing.

Below: After an epic running duel, Rodrigo finally defeats the Count of Barcelona and takes him prisoner.

