

Red Knight vs Realm of Borea Battle report

By 1590, the Dominion of the Red Knights had known relative peace for 60 years. The last great invasion by the neighboring Tusk Confederation in 1523 reached the capital at Abendburg, but failed to take the fortress after a lengthy siege. Over the next decade, the Order and its allies restored the frontier along the Bloodwater River and a watchful peace descended on the realm. Each side launched raids upon the other, but there were no major campaigns.




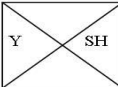

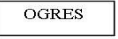






In 1590, the Dark Lord of Borea launched a surprise attack on the Tusk Confederation, having infiltrated or bought off many of its tribes. With the lands of the Tusk Confederation temporarily back under his control the Cold One's armies swept southwards and crashed into the Dominion.

One of the lead elements of this invasion is led by a Borean Yagur Lord – Nulgaw the Fist. His goal is to drive as quickly as possible through the Dominion, living off the land and slaughtering all he encounters until he is able to link up with main army which is targeting Abendburg. Their immediate objective is the fortified city of Heidelfeld.

Nuglaw is opposed by Knight Commander Sir Roderick of Heidelfeld. Sir Roderick knows that Nulgaw's force considerably outnumbers him, but his scouts have also informed him that Nulgaw's army is straggling due to the speed of his march.

Sir Roderick has accordingly gathered such local levies and militia he could in haste and has opted to fight Nulgaw's advanced guard – hoping to defeat him before the supporting columns arrive.

The Armies

<u>Dominion Army</u>	<u>Borean Army</u>
 6 Red Knights led by Knight Commander	 24 Chosen Yagurs with Great Weapons led by Yagur Lord
 6 Vassal Knights led by Honored Brother Knight	 24 Yagurs with Sword and Shield led by Yagur Chief
 29 Esquires with Great weapons led by Captain	 3 Ogres led by Ogre Lord
 28 Militia with spears	 5 Renegade Knights led by Master Necromancer
 11 Militia Archers with Master Wizard	 30 Gitling Spears (2 Berskerkers)
	 20 Gitling swords (1 Berserker)
	 Gitling Berserkers (When launched)

Realm of Borea

The Realm of Borea is led by Nulgaw the Fist, a Borean Yagur Lord. He has dragonscale armor and an additional hand weapon, giving him a terrifying four attacks per turn with MS 6.

He is personally leading a unit of 24 Yagur Crushers – MS 4 brutes with heavy armor and great weapons. Because Nulgaw is Chosen of the Dark Lord, he and his unit radiate The Horror – all enemy morale checks are at -2 and enemy units must always test morale first in melee combat – even if they charge.

In support is Gulgar, a Yagur Chief. He is armed with the Mace of Destruction (AP 2) , heavy armor and shield. He leads a unit of 24 Yagur swords.

Grimsmash is an Ogre Lord and command three Ogre Thumper models. These brutes wear heavy armor, carry vast shields and swing hideously powerful maces (AP 2).

To protect the army's flanks and scout ahead a Renegade Captain named Bruce has 5 Renegade Knights and a Renegade Necromancer. The knights and their captain use flails, while the Necromancer is a Master with Bracers of Defense (5+ ward) and the Staff of Power (+1 casting). He uses Death Magic (naturally).

Rounding out the army are two units of gitling slaves, which serve as chaff, arrow-magnets and emergency rations, depending on the need. The gitling spears have 30 models and 2 berserkers. The swords have 20 models and a single berserker.

Because the scale varies by unit type, the total actual strength of troops on the field is as follows:

Nulgaw: 250 Yagurs

Gulgar: 250 Yagurs

Grimsmash: 8 Ogres

Captain Bruce: 30 knights plus a cabal of Wizards

Leaderless: 600 gitlings with spears and 400 gitlings with swords, and a total of 60 berserkers between them.

Total: 1540+ critters (1516 points)

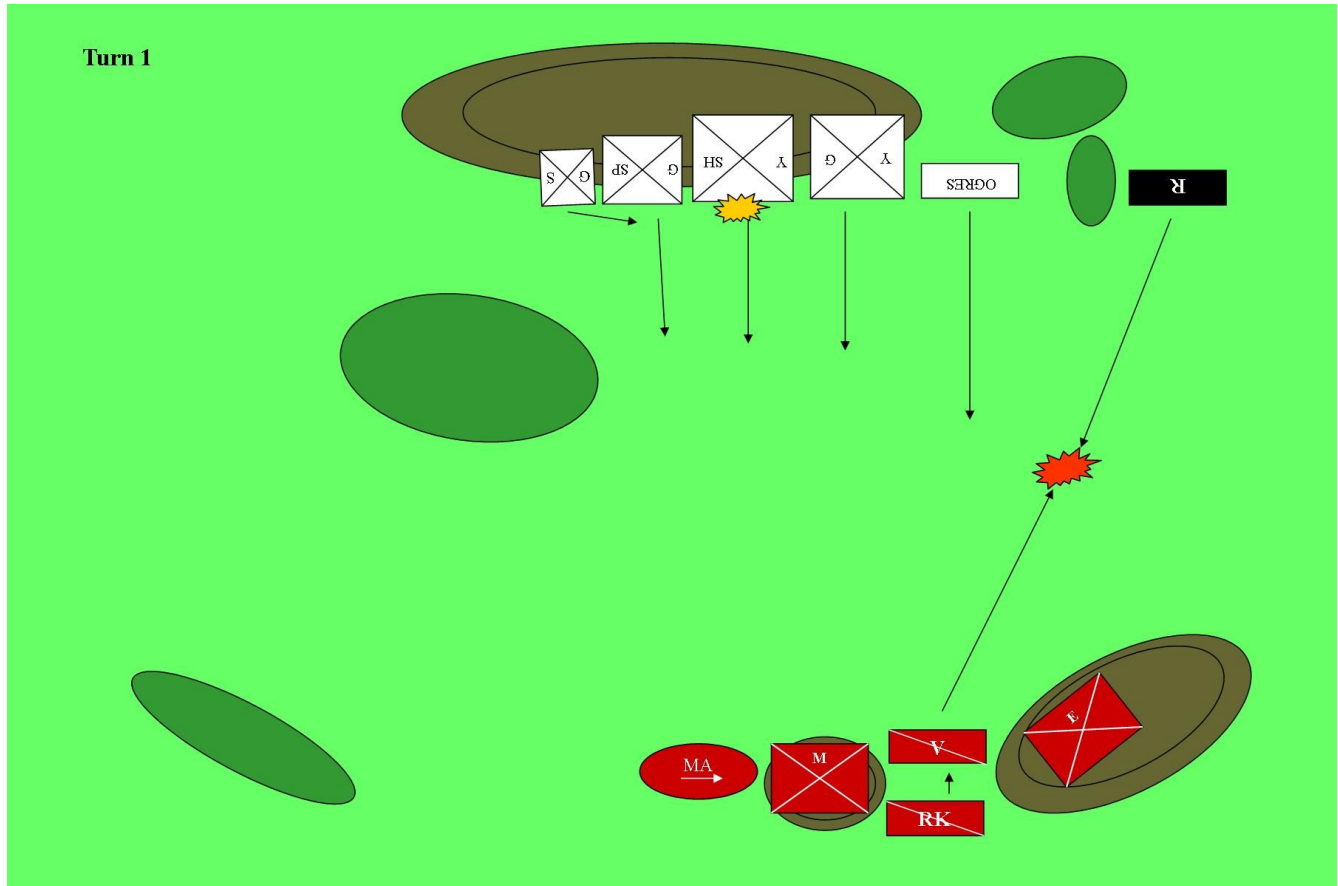
Dominion of the Red Knights

The Dominion forces are led by Sir Roderick himself. As a Knight Commander, he is the natural choice to command. He has the Silver Lance (AP 3) and an Enchanted Shield (automatically blocks first hit). He rides with a mighty force of 7 Red Knights.

Honored Brother Knight Sir William leads another force of 7 vassal knights. He carries an Enchanted Blade.

The Borean battle plan was as subtle as a sledgehammer: The two Yagur units and ogres would shred the Dominion's center. The left flank would be covered by the renegades while the right would be guarded by the menace of the gitling berserkers.

The Dominion strategy was to counterpunch using their two units of knights while the archers and wizard kept up harassing fire.



Borean Turn 1.

There was no reason to use magic as the enemy was out of range, thus the magic phase passed without incident.

During the movement phase the entire Borean line rolled forward, with renegades swinging out wide and the gitlings shifting inward to clear the line of the forest.

With no missile troops, Boreans had no shooting, but the Dominion's militia archers were now in range. They scored 4 hits on the Yagur Swords, which (like all shooting attacks) was cut in half. One saved, so there was only one model removed. They handily passed the subsequent morale check.

There being no melee combat or rallying, it was now

Dominion Turn 1.

Julius rolled a die to cast Hasten on the vassal knights. A "5" indicated success and his Borean counterpart rolled a "2", so his countermagic was ineffective. Hasten gives the target unit (in this case, the vassals knights) an additional inch of base movement, giving them a charge range of 16". The wizard then tried Weariness at the Ogres, but failed to roll high enough.

The vassal knights led by Sir William surged forward at an oblique, impacting on the renegades. Normally, cavalry will consider countercharging, but since the renegades have flails, there was no reason to do so.

During regular movement, the Red Knights moved forward to fill the gap left by the vassals.

Despite their good luck the previous turn, the militia archers missed this shooting phase.

We now came to the first melee combat phase of the game. Combat resolution in Conqueror is simultaneous, even when units are charging.

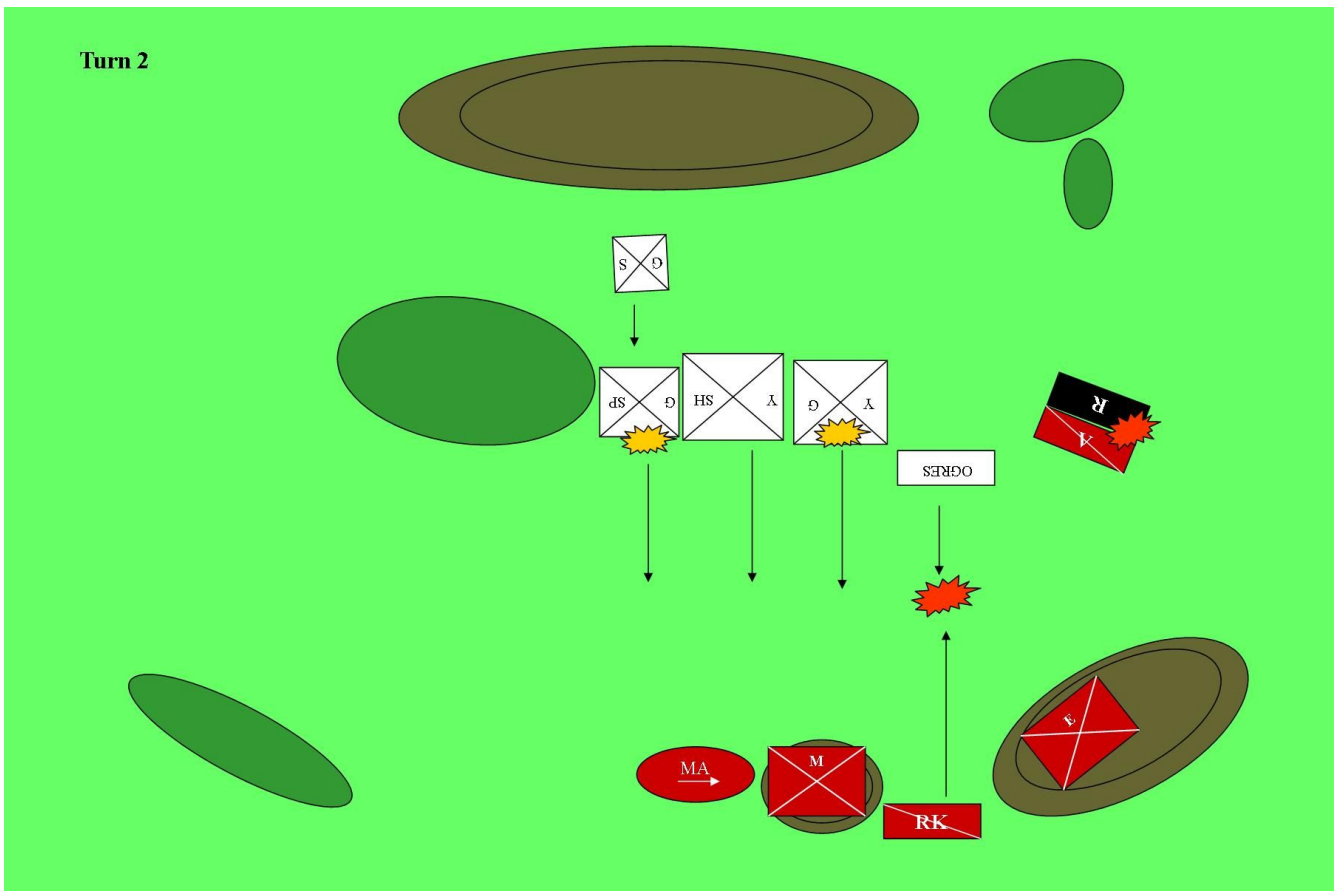
The odds were fairly even. The vassals had MS 4 as did their opponents, meaning both sides would hit on 4+. The vassals had lances, meaning that on this round, their opponents' normal 2+ save would be reduced to a 4+. However the renegades had flails, which are AP 1 but also negate shields, giving them an effective AP equal to that of the vassal knights. What is more, it would not go away after the charge round was complete. The renegade captain, Bruce, also had a flail, as did the Necromancer.

The renegades themselves scored 4 hits, but the vassal knights saved against all but one. The renegade captain scored two hits, but again the vassals were able to save against one of them. The Necromancer scored a single hit. Unlike Bruce, who was hitting on 3+, the necromancer's MS 3 meant he also needed a 4+, but he did get two attacks. He hit with one, and the vassals failed their save.

At the same time, the knights rolled only a single hit, which the renegades were able to save. With his higher MS 5, Sir William scored two hits, but the renegades saved against one of them.

Thus the result of the combat was that 3 vassals and one renegade models were eliminated. This gave the renegades a margin of victory two. Since they had been charged, they rolled a morale check and added their margin of victory (+2). With B morale, it was an easy pass.

The vassals now rolled. They were led by an Honored Brother Knight, who imparted his own A morale (and his Undaunted special rule, which didn't apply in this case). The vassals were also reduced to half strength, making them Shaken, adding an additional -1 modifier for a total of -3. Still, A morale is a good thing, and they managed to (barely) pass without adverse effects.



Borean Turn 2

Now that he was engaged in melee combat, the Necromancer's spell selection was more limited. He could only use spells with the "M" for melee combat next to their description, so that is what he did. His first spell, Drain Life, failed. He managed to cast Enevration, but the ONM wizard hit his countermagic roll and nullified it. So much for Borean magic.

During the movement phase, the Borean lines moved forward once more, with the Ogres slowing down to wait for the rest of the army.

During the shooting phase those pesky militiamen tagged the Yagur Crushers with 4 hits which were reduced to two hits, one of which was saved (from here on out, I'm not going to give the raw number of hits from shooting to save space). The Crushers laughed in contempt at the subsequent morale check.

We now moved to melee combat. The vassal knights were in a bad way: outnumbered and with their lance bonus gone, their opponents would be saving on a 2+ while they would still need a 4+. In desperation, Sir William challenged the renegade captain to a duel, which would at least keep him from using his 2 MS 5 attacks on the remaining vassals.

Duels allow characters to fight one-on-one engagements. Because the fighting is so intense, the participants fight three rounds of combat rather than one.

In the first round, Bruce hit twice, but Sir William saved against both. Sir William missed both of his

attacks. For the second round Sir William again missed, but Bruce scored two hits, and again Sir William saved. The third and final round saw the roles reversed – Sir William scored two hits and with his Fell Blade only needed the captain to fail one save to kill him (since the Fell Blade does two wounds per unsaved hit rather than just one). Alas, the renegade captain made both saves – but he also missed with his attacks.

The duel was thus a draw – a pretty good thing from the Dominion’s perspective as it took the captain out of the fight. Unfortunately, he wasn’t needed.

The renegades scored 3 hits and the necromancer added one of his own to the mix. The vassals scored only one in response, and this was easily saved. They then made their 4 saves, needing a 4+ against the vicious flails. No saves! The three remaining vassals were removed and Sir William now had to make a morale check, since his side clearly lost the combat. Actually, the odds were the same – his side lost by 3 wounds (-3) but the -1 for being shaken no longer applied, since the rest of the unit was dead. With his indomitable A morale, he passed. On the downside, now that the unit he was with was gone, he could (and would) be swarmed next turn.

Dominion Turn 2.

The slaughter of the vassal knights was not at all expected. Surveying the battlefield, Sir Roderick decided that he would charge the Ogres with the Red Knights as the renegades were out of range – even with Haste they would come up short.

Accordingly he Julius cast Inspiration on him and his unit, since that extra hit would be quite useful (particularly during a charge). The spell duly worked, but the Necromancer took a moment from his own slaughter of the vassal knights to countermagic it. Undaunted, the ONM wizard cast it again, and this time there was nothing the Necromancer could do to stop it, since he had used it single countermagic attempt.

Now came movement. The Red Knights charged the ogres. The rest of the line held firm.

The Borean line was bearing down on the Dominion, but the archers kept their heads. They decided that thinning the Yagurs wasn’t working, so they gave the gitling spears a try. They scored a total of 3 hits, only one of which was saved. The gits lost two models but passed their morale check (with E morale, it wasn’t easy!).

The Red Knights charged into the Ogres and Sir Roderick shouted a challenge as he neared his foe. Grimsmash the Ogre Lord strode forth and the two slammed into each other.

Sir Roderick was armed with the Silver Lance, a mighty weapon that is AP 3 on the charge and does two wounds for each unsaved hit. He struck the ogre lord three times and weapon reduced the Grimsmash’s normally formidable 3+ save to a 6+. Not surprisingly, he failed all three saves and was slain. Of course combat is simultaneous, so at the same time he launched 4 crushing attacks of his own against the knight. The ogre lord carried a mace, which normally gives AP 1, but his monstrous strength makes it AP 2, meaning the Knight Commander would only get a 4+ save. He connected with three out of four attacks, but one was deflected by the Enchanted Shield, leaving two saves, one of

which was successful. Sir Roderick's shield was now normal, but his foe was dead.

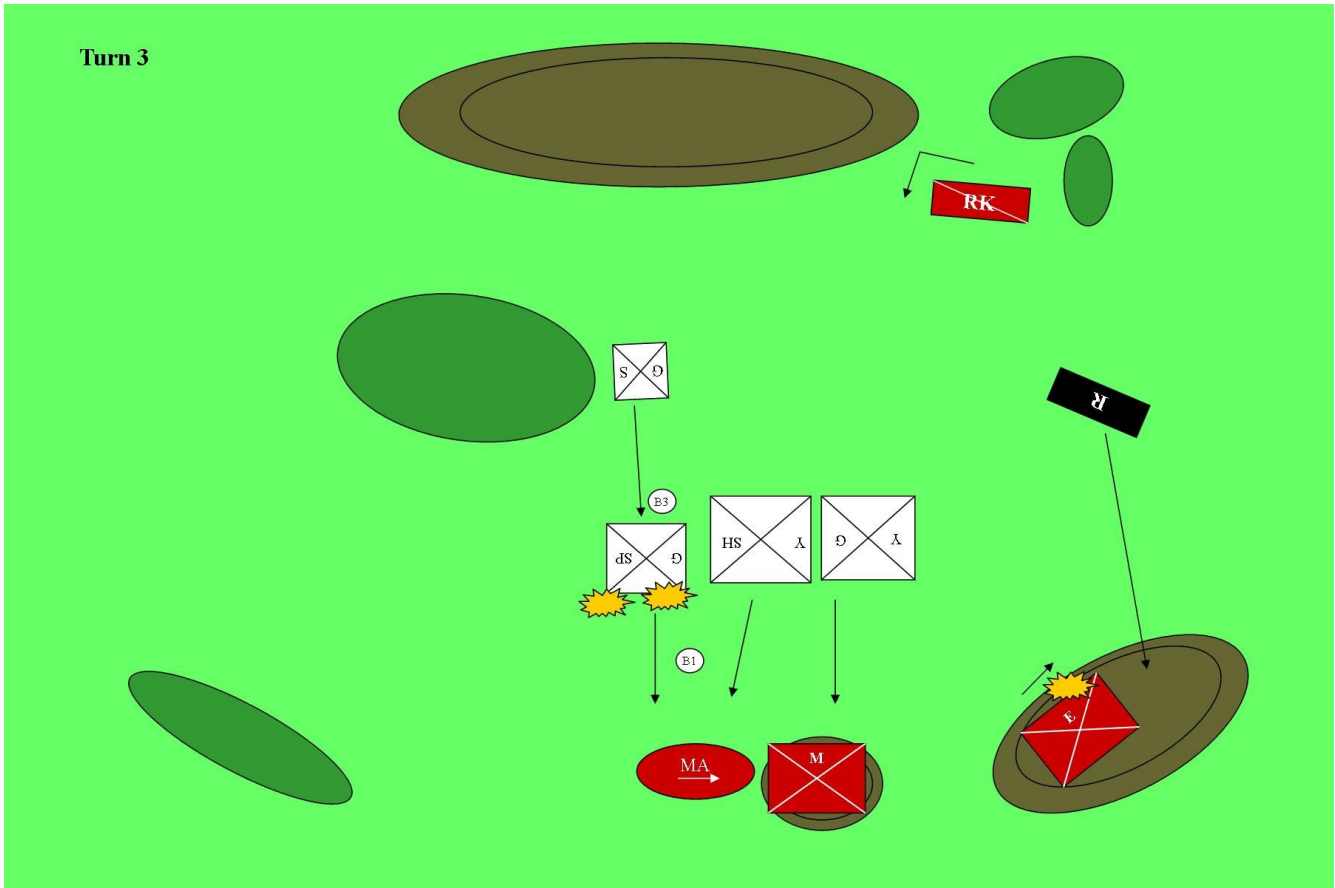
The rest of his knights were similarly effective. With a brutal MS 5 – the best possible for a unit in the game – the knights needed 3+ to hit their enemies, who in turn needed a 4+ to reply. The knights got five hits, plus one from the Inspiration spell. With their 3+ saves reduced to a paltry 5+, the ogres failed five of them, and two models were cut down. The remaining survivor had a single wound left.

For their part, the ogres hurled six attacks back at the knights, hitting home of four of them. Their maces reduced the knights' 2+ save to a 4+ and the knights could only make a single save.

The combat had been a bloodbath. The Red Knights had lost half of their strength and their leader, the Army Commander, had taken a wound. Yet they had shredded the ogres, killing their lord outright and slaughtering two other models. The survivor had only one wound left. The combat result was grim: The knights lost 4 wounds but had inflicted 9, leaving the last ogre to make a morale check at -6 (-5 for the margin of combat and -1 for being shaken). His only solace was the +1 Nuglaw's proximity imparted. Still, -5 was a tough hill to climb and when the dice came up a 5, it was over. He routed.

Because fleeing and pursuit is calculated by rolling a d6 and adding the model's base movement, the ogre had a reasonable chance at getting away since he was only 1 inch slower. The knights immediately announced they would pursue and unfortunately for the ogre, he rolled a 2 and the knights rolled a 4. This placed the knights squarely in the backfield of the Borean army and safely away from a possible flanking attack. Had the knights been stopped, they would likely have been hit by the Yagurs on their flank.

Meanwhile, the hapless Sir William was unceremoniously hacked to bits as the renegades used the swarming rule to surround him. The swarm rule is there to prevent single characters from bogging down much larger units with challenges and with the longer bases, mounted characters are particularly vulnerable. The renegades hit him 4 times, Bruce twice and even the Necromancer got him. He gamely made three of his saves, but four wounds was enough to kill him twice. He missed with both of his attacks. The renegades reformed and looked to see who they would hit next.



Borean Turn 3.

During the magic phase the Necromancer sent Morality at the esquires, but mangled his casting roll. His send try worked and the ONM failed to countermagic it. The esquires lost a model but passed their morale check.

The Boreans then pushed forward once more, with the Yagurs bearing down on the militia spears and the archers beside them. On the flank, the renegades swung out to meet the esquires on equal terms rather than fighting up the hill.

Now that they were close, the gitling spears launched their first berserker (B1), hoping to deter a preemptive charge or maybe even connect with the militia. It only went 5 inches before stalling out between the armies. The swordsmen launched one as well to deter the Red Knights (B3).

Now at short range, the militia archers sent a shower of arrows into the gitling spears and tagged 4 of them, none of whom saved. The gitlings were thrown into disorder.

Dominion Turn 3

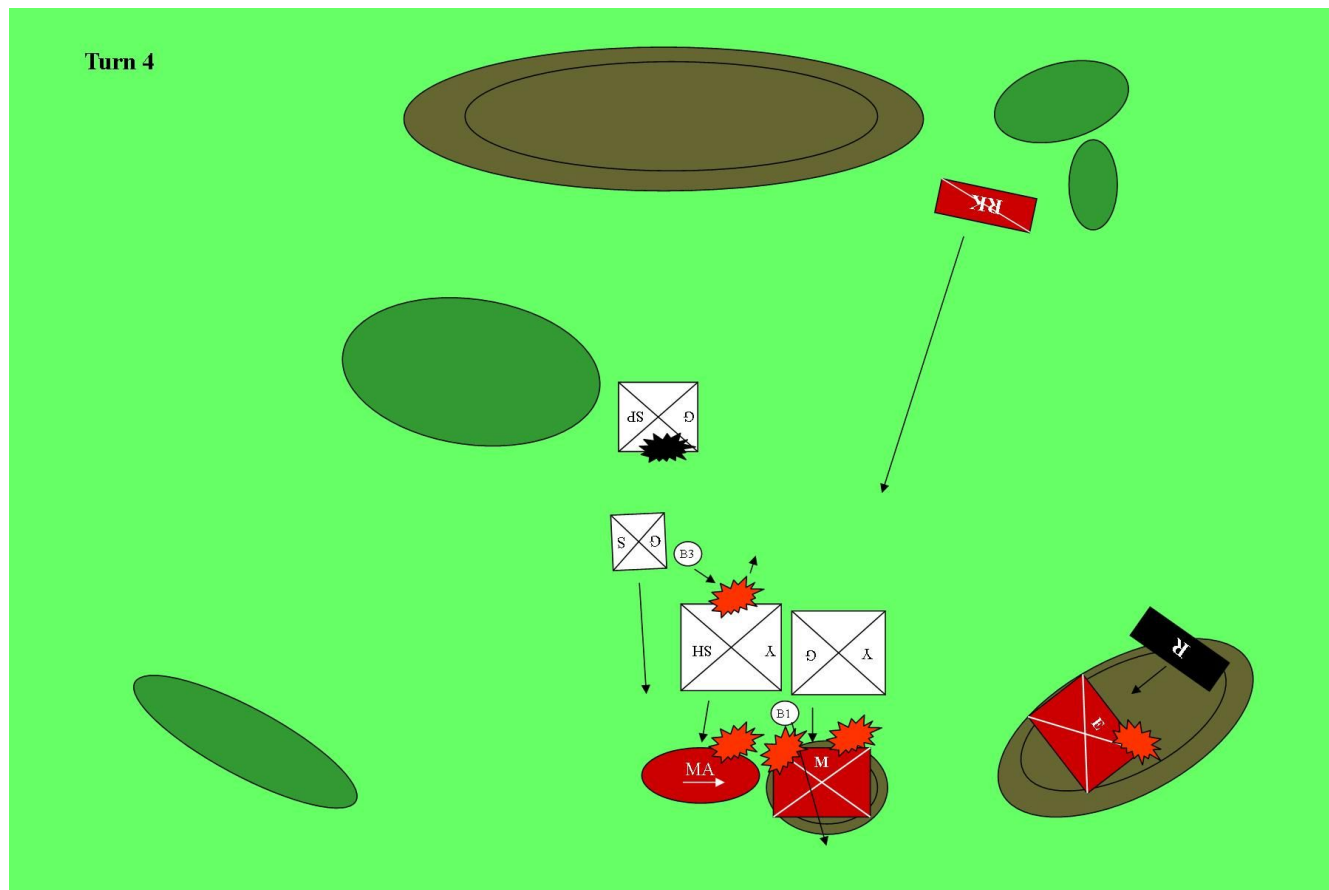
With the main combat imminent, the Julius cast Inspiration on the militia spears and Resistance on the archers. The Necromancer tried to counter Inspiration but failed.

During the movement phase, the Red Knights did a to-the-rear and began closing in with the Yagurs

while the esquires turned to face the renegades.

Shooting was particularly productive. The archers hit the gitling spears twice, and though one model made his save, the resulting morale check forced them to rout.

Meanwhile, the gitling swordsmen flung their single berserker out to try to deter the knights from hitting the Yagur units' rear.



Borean Turn 4.

The Necromancer cast Mortality at the esquires, killing one as the countermagic failed. His second attempt had no result. The esquires held and waited for the inevitable cavalry charge.

During the movement phase, the Boreans rolled a 5 while the Dominion player got a 4 to see who controlled the first berserker (B1). This allowed the Borean to move him 5" in any direction – in this case into the militia spearmen! He scored a mighty 6 hits, four of which were fatal – before exiting out of the unit's rear. The Dominion player used his 4" to push him closer to the table edge.

For the second berserker (B3), the roles were reversed. The Dominion got a 5 while the Boreans got a 2. This gave the berserker just enough movement to slam into the Yagur Swords' rear rank, hitting three models and killing two. The Borean player then moved him back out of the way. Both units passed their morale checks.

The Yagur Swords now charged the archers while Nulgaw and his Yagur Crushers ran uphill in to the thicket of militia spears. On the flank, the renegades slammed into the esquires. The climax of the battle was at hand.

During the shooting phase, the archers fired a final desperate volley at the Yagurs charging them. Panicked, they scored only 2 hits, both of which were saved. It was now time for melee combat.

The odds were long against the militia archers. With MS 1, they would need 5s to hit the Yagurs' MS 4. Conversely the brutes would hit the skirmishers on a 2+. The Yagurs' Hard Charging special ability was moot, since the archers had no armor.

The Yagur Swords scored five hits on their unarmored opponents, and their chieftain Gulgar added two more, but the Resistance spell automatically negated one of them, so only six were killed. For their part, the archer scored two hits, but Yagurs made both of their 4+ saves. Julius, the wizard, scored two hits, and only one was saved, so at least he scored a kill. Still, the situation was grim. The archers had lost the battle by a margin of 6, were shaken and outranked. Even with the wizard's leadership, the -8 penalty they suffered was just too punishing. They routed.

The Yagurs eagerly pursued. The archers and wizard fled a total of 8" but the Yagurs were quicker, and cut them down 9" away. The only blessing from this was the fact that the Yagurs had been pulled forward and so would take a turn before they could turn to face the embattled spearmen.

In the center, things looked better for the Dominion. The spearmen were spread out in a 7-model-wide formation, giving them 14 attacks vs the five-model front of their opponents. In addition, the MS 2 spearmen were uphill, meaning that instead of needed a 5+ to hit their MS 4 enemy, they needed only a 4+.

The spearmen also had one other advantage: Inspiration. Though their wizard was shortly to expire, his penultimate act would guarantee at least one hit during the coming melee combat.

The Yagur Crushers of course were hitting on 3+ except for the Army Commander, Nulgaw, who needed only a 2+ to hit.

As it turned out, the gods were smiling on the plucky militiamen. Eight of their models scored hits, to which Inspiration made 9. The staggered Yagurs in heavy armor managed four saves, which left five dead.

For their part, the Yagurs scored 4 hits with their great weapons, whose AP 2 utterly negated the 5+ granted by the militia's shields and light armor. Nulgaw scored 4 hits and since he was charging, could count his attacks as AP 1 thanks to the Hard Charging special ability. Despite this, two of the militia saved, meaning the final score was 6 militia wounds vs 5 Yagurs. The militia thus lost the combat by 1, were shaken (-1), outranked (-1) and faced The Horror of Gulgaw's Chosen (-2) for a total of -5. Despite all this, the farmers and tradesmen of the Dominion did not falter. They rolled well and ended up in disorder, but held.

The Yagurs now tested. They had won the combat by 1 and outranked their enemy, giving them +2.

They did not get a bonus for the army commander because he was applying his “A” morale, but as a casual glance at the Morale Table indicates, +2 for an “A” morale unit means it passes, period.

We now moved to the battle between the renegades and esquires. The Captain Jack issued a challenge to Bruce. The esquires’ leader was equipped with the Glaive of Rending, an AP 3 great weapon and wore the Armor of Dwarven Steel, which provided him with a 4+ save. This meant that the flail of the renegade captain would only reduce his save to a 5+ since there was no shield to negate. The renegade’s armor would also be reduced to a 5+, making the fight perfectly equal.

Each scored 1 hit on the other, but while Captain Jack made his save, the Bruce failed his. The second round saw the same result: each scored 1 hit, but only the Armor of Dwarven Steel could absorb it. The renegade captain fell dead.

Around them the combat continued to rage. The esquires scored 3 hits, only one of which was saved. The cavalry scored only one hit in response, but the flail’s AP neutralized the esquires’ light armor. The Necromancer, however, had better luck, and killed two of the infantry.

The final result: 4 wounds lost by the renegades vs 3 by the esquires. The esquires thus won by 1, and outranked their opponent and so easily passed with their +2 modifier and their captain’s “B” morale.

The renegades were a different story. They lost the combat by 1, were shaken and outranked, for a total of -3. They fell into disorder.

With all combat resolved, the militia spears had to take an additional test due to the rout of the archers next to them. If they routed, the Yagurs would pursue and likely drive them off the board. If they held, the Yagurs faced a brutal rear charge from the fast-closing Red Knights. Despite their ragged ranks, dwindling numbers and The Horror, they passed.

Dominion Turn 4.

The wizard was dead. The archers destroyed. For the Dominion, there was only one thing to do: charge the Red Knights into the rear of the Yagur Crushers and try to save the militia.

On their right flank, the renegade knights were almost done. Captain Jack challenged the Necromancer to a duel and made short work of him. The esquires scored two hits, and both saves failed. The renegades missed and the unit was eliminated without further fanfare.

In the center, the spears continued to overachieve. They scored 8 hits and this time there were only 3 saves, leaving 5 dead Yagurs. The Yagurs cut down 3 spearmen and Nulgaw himself accounted for 3 more, for a total of 6 fallen spearmen.

The Red Knights with their MS 5 were hitting on 3s and scored two hits with no save due to their AP 2 lances on the charge. Sir Roderick himself scored 3 hits, likewise with no save. Perhaps because they were panicked, the Yagurs’ attacks missed entirely.

Normally, the Yagurs would have had to roll morale first, but The Horror forces all opposing units to

roll first, even if they charge.

Still, the odds were good. The Red Knights had won the combat by 4 (10 wounds vs 6) and thanks to the militia now outranked the Yagurs (+1) and were of course behind them (+1 for rear attack) for a net of +6. The Horror was pointless.

The militia were shaken (-1) and disordered (-1) and faced The Horror (-2) but this -4 was offset by the scope of the victory (+4) outranking (+1) and the presence of the army commander (+1) so their modifier was +2. They passed the test.

The Yagurs now tested. They were shaken (-1), outranked (-1, since their own ranks were negated by the rear attack) and of course attacked from the rear (-4) for a final modifier of -10. Even Nulgaw's mighty "A" morale was virtually useless. To no one's surprise, the Yagurs routed.

The ragged spearmen opted not to pursue and passed their command check to restrain themselves, but the Red Knights eagerly set off after their fleeing foes. The Yagurs rolled a 3 which added to their movement of 4 gave them 7" and they set off towards the relative safety of the gitlings.

The Red Knights also rolled a 3, but their movement of 7" gave them a total of 10" The Yagurs were run down and their army commander eliminated.

With the militia spearmen no longer engaged, they attempted to rally and succeeded. Now reduced to less than half their starting strength, they grimly awaited a flank charge from the Yagur Swords.

The gitlings, on the hand, lost the combat by 1, but were on the flank and outranked their opponent for a net +1. Not bad, except they were “E” morale. They went into disorder.

Dominion Turn 5.

The Esquires turned to face the threat of the Yagur Swords and gitlings, even though they were far enough away that neither would likely reach them.

The Red Knights had two options.

They could turn to face their embattled flank, which would eliminate their -3 morale modifier and also negate the +1 of the disordered gitlings. This would yield them no additional attacks, however.

Or they could have the Knight Commander, who was unengaged, use his movement to shift into contact with the gitlings. This would leave them with the negative modifier for being outflank, but would give them three attacks. If the knights won the combat (by inflicting more wounds), this would force the gitlings to test first – and if they routed, the -3 flank modifier would be moot.

This was what they chose to do.

Sir Roderick easily hit all three of his attacks, none of which were saved. The panicked gitlings hit him once, but it rode off of his armor. This left the gitlings shaken (-1), as well as disordered (-1). They got +1 for being on a flank and +1 for outranking, but their net modifier was -3. Unsurprisingly, they routed.

The Red Knights immediately announced they would pursue and their 11” advance left the gitlings destroyed and the knights in the Borean backfield.

The gitling swords, who had been thinking about charging the knights, panicked and routed, fleeing away from the battle.

With this, the battle effectively came to a close. The three remaining units were too far away from each other to engage in the last remaining turn and, after the gitling swords failed their rally test, there was nothing left to do but tally the victory points.

Turn 6



Total losses for the Dominion were 706 points and 798 points remained on the tabletop. The Realm of Borea lost 1,193 points and had only 323 left on the tabletop.

The Dominion thus gained +1 victory point for eliminating more enemy points, +1 for having more points on the table top (and thus holding the battlefield) and +1 for killing the enemy army commander. Thus with a crushing 3-0 score, the Red Knights won a close-run but decisive battle.

Analysis

Both sides made solid decisions and had the luck been just a little different, the Boreans would have done a bit better. On the other hand, the vassal knights had horrific luck, and if they had held, or at least tied down the renegade cavalry, the esquires could have taken a more central role.

One of the key areas of decision was magic.

Despite the fact that it does not do a lot of damage, the Life school proved an excellent choice for the Dominion. Without the two Inspiration spells, the game could well have gone against them.

The Boreans got much less use from their Necromancer. Throwing bolts of death around may feel good, but ultimately magic's greatest power is to shift the odds of the actual melee combat. The Dominion demonstrated this.