

## Unit Descriptions from 'Total War: Arena'

### BOII SPEARMEN

The Boii crossed the Alps to settle in northern Italy a couple of centuries before Hannibal's time. Historians differ on whether they were Celts or Slavs but it is thought that they travelled from lands north-east of the Alps that are now part of Hungary, Austria and southern Germany; the region of Bohemia, said to be named after them, may have been their original homeland. Although they managed to dislodge, and to an extent integrate with, the Etruscans when they first settled south of the Alps, Rome's rising power led to inevitable, and protracted, conflict in the area. Hannibal's cause, and his gold, were very attractive to Boii fighting to retain their lands; according to Livy, writing two hundred years later, it was Boii tribesmen who showed Hannibal the best path through the Alps.

*Who needs discipline when you're this fired up by hatred of Rome?*

### LIBYAN INFANTRY

Hannibal relied heavily on his Libyan troops. As their experience and loyalty grew with every battle, so too their skills and discipline improved, along with their equipment, much of which may have been looted from defeated Roman legionaries. Much of the time these heavy-duty foot-soldiers were at the heart of Hannibal's Campaign.

*Stand still too long and they'll roll right over you.*

### ARMoured ELEPHANT

However intimidating and effective a war-elephant may be in combat, it is still vulnerable to attack, especially on its flanks. Despite its tough skin, away from those swinging tusks and stomping feet a well-placed sword-thrust or javelin shot can still bring an elephant down. The solution was to add armour in the form of metal plates, hung to cover the animals' exposed flanks. Thus protected, even the relatively small North African elephants used by the Carthaginians become a force to be reckoned with.

*The only thing more terrifying than a charging elephant is an armoured, charging elephant.*

### NUMIDIAN CAVALRY

Numidia, which covered an area of North Africa that now falls in Western Tunisia and Eastern Algeria, was a tribal society, sometimes equated with that of the Berbers. However, by Hannibal's time the Numidians had united under a king, Masinissa, who - initially at least - pledged his allegiance to Carthage. Although Hannibal was best known for his use of elephants, he made excellent tactical use of Numidian cavalry. The Roman historian Livy described the Numidians as 'by far the best horsemen in Africa'. Lightly armed and unarmoured, they make ideal mounted strike teams.

*Trained to hit the enemy and be gone before they know it.*

### VETERANS OF TREBIA

Shortly after first crossing the Alps Hannibal met the Roman forces by the River Trebia in what is now northern Italy. Here he employed the insight and innovative thinking that made him such an outstanding general, using his cavalry to goad the Roman commander, the impetuous and short-sighted Consul Tiberius Sempronius Longus into an ill-advised frontal assault across the freezing river. On the far side, the exhausted Romans were outflanked, their cavalry panicked by Hannibal's elephants and driven off, leaving their infantry exposed. They suffered heavy losses. Trebia was the first major battle of the Second Punic War, and set the stage for Hannibal's future successes.

*Buoyed by their victory against Rome, these veterans stand among the finest infantry Hannibal has under his command.*

### INSUBRES SWORDSMEN

The Insubres were a tribe of Celtic origin who crossed the Alps from the north-west to settle the fertile lands beyond. They arrived in northern Italy before their neighbours, the Boii, and the Greek historian Polybius considered them the most important Celtic Tribe south of the Alps. In 225 BC the Insubres and the Boii fought back against Roman incursions into their lands, enlisting skilled mercenaries from neighbouring Celtic tribes across the region. After the Boii were beaten back, the Insubres tried to make peace with Rome but their overtures were rejected: Rome didn't want to share, she wanted to conquer. By the time Hannibal arrived they were more than ready to take up arms against the Romans.

*Roman-hating swordsmen who make a formidable and unpredictable foe.*

### CAESAI

Although the Carthaginian language is long dead, several sources concur that their word for elephant was Caesai. One of these sources is Julius Caesar himself, who claimed that an ancestor of his had killed a Carthaginian war-elephant in the First Punic War, and from this his family acquired the cognomen 'Caesar'; he even featured an elephant, above the word 'Caesar', on the first denarius he had minted. Other sources claim Caesar's title came from more mundane familial features such as hair or eye colour, or the manner of his birth, but it is no surprise that a great leader should try and associate himself with mastery over this most magnificent of beasts.

*Elephants: powerful, noble and dangerous.*

### IBERIAN SKIRMISHERS

The lands of south-east Spain were the first European territories to fall under Carthage's influence in the Second Punic War. The Carthaginians even founded a new city there, which became known as Carthago Nova. Hannibal, and his brother Hasdrubal, spent a long time alternatively fighting and recruiting the Iberians. These lightly armoured skirmishers are highly mobile experts at guerrilla tactics, and use their thin metal javelins with consummate skill, making them an asset to any army that aims to fully utilise a variety of fighting styles.

*Darting in and out of the fray, the Iberian skirmishers harass the enemy's front lines.*

### ELITE HIPPEIS

The Hippeis, Greece's mounted warrior class, were recruited to form the Spartan Royal Guard, and often took part in processions during public festivals across the Greek city-states. These mounted knights were often represented in Greek art, and were even buried with their horses. All Hippeis are respected horsemen, but these are the best of the best, riding alongside each other to wreak havoc on any battlefield.

*Some of the best horseman money can buy.*

## VETERANS OF CANNAE

After being defeated by Hannibal at Trebia and Trasimene the Romans withdrew to concentrate on protecting Rome itself. This gave Hannibal a chance to regroup, resupply and to recruit large numbers of Gaulish warriors to his cause. When Hannibal captured the major Roman supply depot at Cannae the Romans responded in force, fielding an army thought to be twice the size of Hannibal's. Hannibal used a crescent formation, putting his Gaulish recruits at the centre and making careful use of cavalry on the wings to enfold, and then trap, the Roman forces as the battle progressed. Estimates of Roman losses vary, but there is no doubt a significant proportion of their troops were killed or captured. Cannae sent a spasm of demoralised panic through the nascent Roman empire, while for the Carthaginians and allied troops who took part in Hannibal's greatest victory, the seizing of Rome went from dream to achievable reality.

*Curators of the massacre at Cannae. Unstoppable, unforgiving killing machines.*

## SAMNITE WARRIORS

The Samnites, who may have been an offshoot of the Sabines, were a confederation of four Italic tribes who lived in what is now south central Italy. They fought alongside Rome against the Gauls in 354BC, but were subsequently subjugated by the Romans; a lot of early gladiators were thought to be Samnite captives. Though many Samnites remained loyal to - or were afraid of - Rome, who had ruled them for nearly a century by the time Hannibal arrived, a number left their farmsteads to fight for Hannibal. Living in the Roman heartlands, they were a potential threat on the empire's doorstep, an image some were only too happy to play up.

*Rome's own 'bogey men', out to cause trouble.*

## BAAL

Ba'al Hammon was considered the King of the Gods in Carthage; a deity of weather and vegetative fertility, he was depicted as a bearded man with either a tall headdress or curling ram's horns. Child sacrifices were thought to be carried out in Ba'al's name and he is associated with the Greek god Cronus and the Roman god Saturn. Many believe that Hannibal was named after him (Hanniba'al). If an Elephant was to earn the same title they would have to be of superior breeding, and it is likely the Carthaginians breed their compact and sometimes flighty North African elephants with the larger and more easily tamed Syrian elephants to produce superior war beasts; Hannibal's favourite elephant was named Surus - the Syrian.

*A god amongst elephants.*

## BOII SKIRMISHERS

The name of the Boii tribesmen of northern Italy means either 'The Herding People' or 'The Warrior People', depending on which source is to be believed. Given they valued cattle and gold above all else - in part because these assets were easy to steal away - and were renowned for their fierce nature, either name would fit. By the time of Hannibal's Italian campaign they were already used to fighting alongside the other Gaulish tribes in the region, united by their hatred of Rome. When they killed Roman general Lucius Postumius Albinus in 216 BC, the Boii chieftains turned his skull into a sacrificial bowl.

*Front line troops, knowing no fear.*

## NUMIDIAN VANGUARD

Numidian cavalry could mount a swift and unexpected offensive, coming out of nowhere to strike the enemy's front lines before the rest of the army was in range. The Numidians' legendary prowess came from a combination of their ability to control their mounts effortlessly despite using neither saddles nor bridle, their fearlessness and their agility and speed, the latter largely a result of never wearing armour and carrying only a small round shield and light weaponry. Hannibal's Numidian riders played decisive roles in the battles of Trebia and Cannae, harassing the enemy to lure them out of formation.

*The ultimate thorn in the enemy's side, using their javelins to make fast and deadly assaults.*

## SACRED BAND OF CARTHAGE

Although the Carthaginians made extensive use of foreign soldiers in their land forces, the tradition of the Sacred Band of Carthage, founded in the 4th Century BC, also gave the sons of Carthage's nobles a chance to serve their city in times of war. Trained from an early age, they were able to afford the very best arms and armour. Their primary weapon was the spear, and they often deployed in a solid Greek-style phalanx placed in the centre of the infantry line behind the war-elephants, protected by the cavalry on the wings.

*Carthage's finest soldiers. These noble warriors will go to any lengths to advance their city's cause.*

## CAMPAIGN ELITES

These soldiers have endured a long, hard road. They have survived the Iberian campaign, crossed the Alps with Hannibal, and seen some spectacular victories against the Romans, most notably at Cannae. Along the way their combat skills have reached new heights, they have become tough as only veterans of multiple battles can be, and they have equipped themselves with the best weapons and armour - as taken from lesser warriors who, after meeting them, have no further use for their equipment. Merely sharing the field with such elite warriors can inspire the troops.

*You are in the presence of legendary victors.*

## TANIT

Tanit was the main deity of the Carthaginian Army, and consort of Baal Hammon. She was associated with the moon - and sometimes equated with the goddess Astarte - but also with fertility and war. She was sometimes represented with a lion's head, to indicate her ferocious aspect, and it is likely blood sacrifices, including of children, were made to her. Adorning a heavily armoured Elephant with Tanit's holy symbol would have inspired the Carthaginian forces and weakened the resolve of the enemy.

*This is the force that spread fear and awe throughout the ancient world.*