

THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD BRIDGE

BIG BATTLE RAVENFEAST

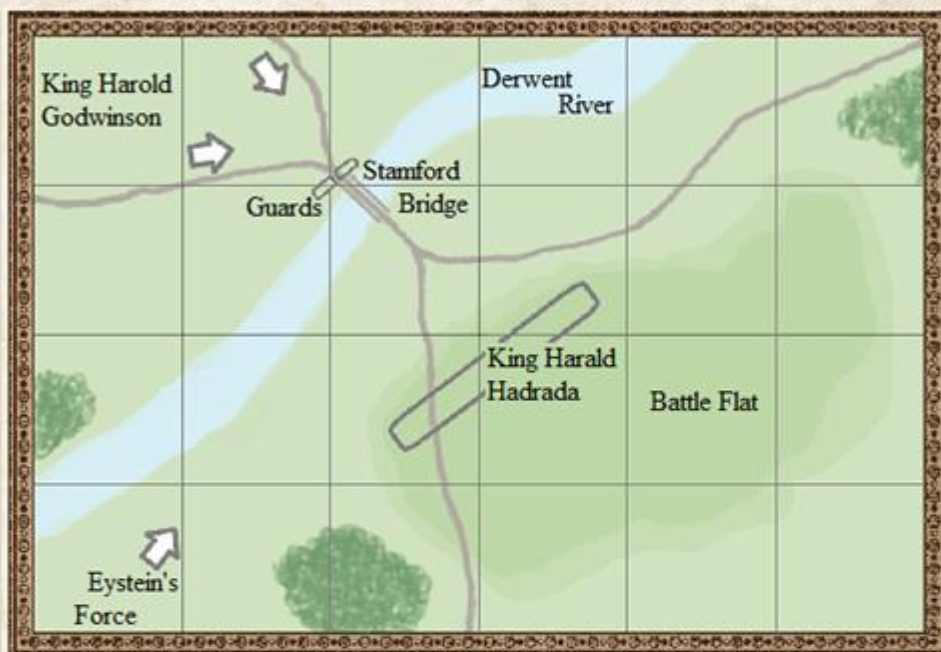
25 SEPTEMBER 1066. AN INVADING NORSE ARMY LED BY KING HARALD HARDRADA AND THE ENGLISH KING'S BROTHER TOSTIG GODWINSON HAD JUST SOUNDLY DEFEATED THE COMBINE FORCES OF THE NORTHERN EARLS AND NOW AWAIT THEIR EARNED HOSTAGES FROM YORK. THEY ARE COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY THE SUDDEN ARRIVAL OF A SAXON ARMY LED BY KING HAROLD GODWINSON.

SET UP: 2-4 players

First the Norse deploy 18 units: 6 unit relief force off-board, 2 unit bridge guard force on the west side of the bridge, and 10 unit main force scattered in camps along the east side of the river and across hilltop. Roll dice or throw cardboard chits across the table to randomized main force unit starting positions. No 2 of these units can start within 6" of each other.

Then the Saxons deploy 30 units: 15 units along each of the NW roads as they wish (greater than 6" from any bridge guards).

The Derwent River is not traversable. There is no turn limit!



FORCES: Both armies are in bad shape for this battle. The Norse, led by King Harald Hardrada and Earl Tostig Godwinson, resting and awaiting the arrival of hostages after their successful Battle of Fulford, are caught totally by surprise. One third, led by Eystein Orre, are guarding the boats miles away. The main force are in camp, disorganized and out of their armor. The English, led by King Harold Godwinson, just force marched 185 miles in four days in order to launch this surprise attack. To reflect this, all Norse units except for Eystein's will have -1 Armor Rating and all Saxon units will have -1 Melee Rating (Missile Rating is unaffected). The Bridge Guards fight heroically dying nearly to-a-man in order to give the main force time to hastily form a shield wall on the hill. They have a Moral Rating of 6 as long as they hold the bridge. Eystein's force runs for miles in armor to reach the battlefield at what appears to be too late. Those units will have -1 Melee Rating and -1 Moral Rating when they arrive. They enter the SW board edge when the main force loses 7 or more stands.

SCALE: One "unit" in this scenario represents approximately 500 men.

OBJECTIVES: Battle continues until one side yields the field. Outnumbered, the Norwegians need to inflict enough casualties with the bridge and main force that their relief force can help them win the battle. Both sides need to minimize their losses in order to successfully continue on to face William at Hastings in a couple weeks' time. If the winner of the field has 16 or less stands remaining, the game is only a minor victory; 12 or less stands, it is a draw.

HISTORICAL OUTCOME: The Saxons are delayed at the bridge, the guards there slow them enough so the main force can form up on the hill. There is a tale of a lone berserker that stood on the bridge and brought down scores of men. Harald and Tostig defend the high ground, possibly underestimating the numbers of the Saxon army and hoping their armored reinforcing force would arrive before too long. After running for miles, Eystein's force arrives at the battlefield too late to be of any help. The main force is being rolled up as they enter. Although they join the fight, they are also overrun. At the end of the battle, the Saxon army lost 5,000 and the Norse army 4,000.

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SAXON ARMY

ORDER OF BATTLE

Saxon Army commanded by King Harold Godwinson

(32 units / 731 points)

Name	Units	Move	Missile	Melee	Armor	Morale	Pts	Traits
King Harold Godwinson	x1	6"	0	5	5	5	75	Leader, Tough (3)
Sub Commander	x2	6"	0	4	4	4	92	Hero, Tough (2)
Huscarl	x6	6"	0	4	4	4	216	Tough (2)
Veteran Fyrd	x6	6"	0	3	2	3	96	
Bowman	x6	6"	2 (18")	2	2	2	108	
Fyrd	x12	6"	0	2	2	2	144	

* King Harold Godwinson & Sub Commander each include a unit of Huscarls

NORSE ARMY

ORDER OF BATTLE

Norse Army commanded by King Harald Hardrada

(12 units / 235 points)

Name	Units	Move	Missile	Melee	Armor	Morale	Pts	Traits
King Harald Hardrada	x1	6"	0	5	5	5	45	Leader
Earl Tostig Godwinson	x1	6"	0	4	4	4	34	Hero
Huskarl	x2	6"	0	4	4	4	72	Tough (2)
Berserker	x1	6"	0	4 (x2)	3	4	30	
Bondi Archer	x3	6"	2 (18")	2	2	2	54	
Bondi	x2	6"	0	2	2	2	24	
Thrall	x2	8"	1 (8")	1	1	1	18	

* King Harald Hardrada & Earl Tostig Godwinson each include a unit of Huskarls

Bridge Guards commanded by Berserker Hero

(3 units / 111 points)

Name	Units	Move	Missile	Melee	Armor	Morale	Pts	Traits
Berserker Hero	x1	6"	0	4 (x2)	3	4	75	Hero, Mighty, Tough (3)
Hirdmen	x2	6"	0	3	3	3	36	

* Berserker Hero includes a unit of Berserkers

Boat Guards commanded by Eystein Orre

(7 units / 142 points)

Name	Units	Move	Missile	Melee	Armor	Morale	Pts	Traits
Eystein Orre	x1	6"	0	4	4	4	34	Hero
Huskarl	x2	6"	0	4	4	4	72	Tough (2)
Hirdmen	x2	6"	0	3	3	3	36	
Bondi	x2	6"	0	2	2	2	24	

* Eystein Orre includes a unit of Huskarls