

The Battle Of Golnabad

8th of March 1722

By Greg Savvinos

Shah Husain I of Persia was a kind man whose aversion to the shedding of blood was renowned, as was his inability to make a decision. The later years of his reign were dominated by court intrigue and saw several dangerous rebellions on the periphery of the empire.

The most significant of these was that of Kandahar in what is now Afghanistan which successfully threw off Persian rule in 1709. The Afghans repelled several Persian attempts to quell their rebellion and in 1722 following a Persian attempt to make peace, which the Afghans saw as a sign of weakness, their leader Mahmud decided to launch an attack on the heart of the empire..

Mahmud surprised his opponents by advancing across the desert and arrived in the vicinity of Isfahan in early March 1722. This unexpected event threw the Persian court in to confusion and hurried efforts were made to gather a force to punish the impudent Afghans. The Grand Vizier Mohammad Qoli Khan advocated a defensive strategy to allow more troops to arrive from the provinces before attacking the Afghans, but others at court thought such a course of action would be shameful and the Grand Vizier was overruled.

The Safavid army, a motley collection of Royal troops, feudal contingents and levies marched out to seek battle. On the 8th of March, a date nominated by the court astrologers, the Safavid army of between 40 and 50 thousand faced the Afghan force of 20 to 25 thousand near the town of Golnabad. Again the Persian leadership could not agree as to what course of action to take and despite a council of war deciding to stand on the defensive, Rostram Khan and Seyyed Abdallah impetuously advanced to attack the Afghans.

What followed was a piecemeal attack by the Persians which obtained some local success, but which ultimately was enveloped and overwhelmed by the Afghans who went on to smash the stationary Persian centre and rout the Safavid army. The Persians are believed to have lost 15,000 dead and the Afghans 500.

The Persians fled back to Isfahan and the Afghans besieged the capital which fell after a prolonged siege and Mahmud was proclaimed Shah. However Persia's troubles were far from over.

The Scenario:

The weather is sunny Start on Turn 3. Basic Length is 7 turns.

Terrain notes:

- The canal is treated as an obstacle by all troops (+ one extra BW).
- Contours or elevations are treated as per the rules.

Each square on the map represents one foot of playing surface

Map Scale: 1:100

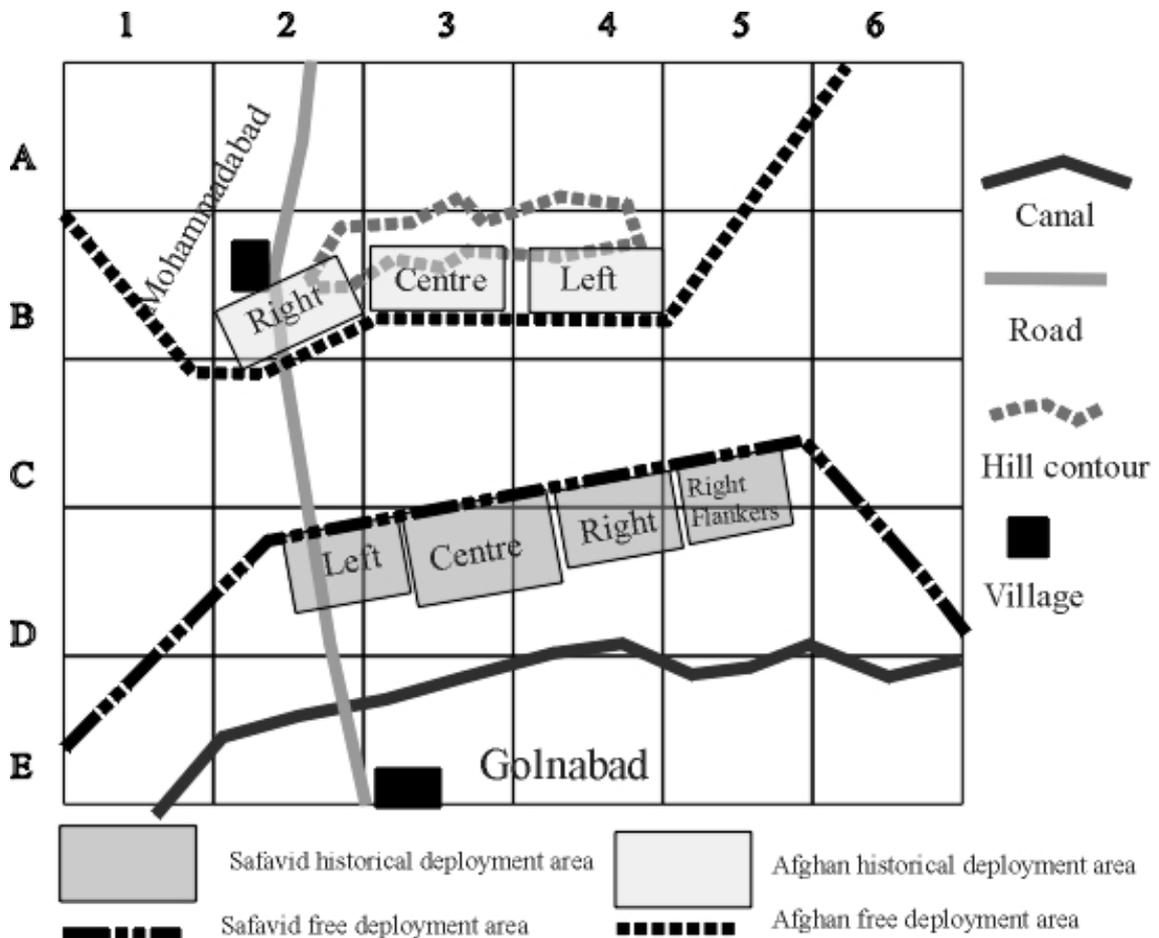
Deployment Rules

- For Historical Deployment set up the units for each force within the area indicated
- For Free Deployment place Safavid units anywhere below the line indicated and place the Afghan units anywhere t above the line indicated

Special Rules

1. Leader's ratings have been adjusted to reflect their performance in the actual battle.
2. The Safavid command was deeply divided and at odds with each other. To reflect this the Safavid Commander may not use the "Grabbing the Lapels" rule (F 2.1)
3. The Safavid troops are rated as per page 5 *The Lion and the Crescent* module.
4. The Afghan troops are rated as per page 7 *The Lion and the Crescent* module.

The Golnabad Battlefield:



The Golnabad Orders of Battle

SAFAVID PERSIAN army:

Mohammad Qoli Khan (Poor)

Army Break point 9

Left

Ali Mardan Khan +1

2 x Feudal Cavalry

Ferez Qullah -1

2 x Feudal Cavalry

Centre

Cheik Ali Khan -2

2 x Royal Guard Cavalry

Ali Riza -2

2 x Feudal Cavalry

Mohammad Khan -2

1x Tufenghis

4 x Levies

2 x Heavy artillery

Ahmad Khan -2

1 x Tufenghis

4 x Levies

Right

Rostram Khan +2

2 x Royal Guard Cavalry

2 x Feudal Cavalry

Right Flankers

Seyyed Abdallah

2 x Light Cavalry

TOTAL (for Free Deployment)

4 x Royal Guard Cavalry (36)

8 x Feudal cavalry (40)

3 x Light Cavalry (9)

2 x Tufenghis (12)

8 x Levies (32)

2 x Heavy Artillery (20)

Total points (149)

AFGHAN army:

Mahmud (Good)

Army Break point 6

1 x Zamburak

Left

Nasrollah V +1

5 x Afghan Horse

Centre

Ashraf V+1

5 x Afghan Horse

Right

Amanullah V +1

5 x Afghan Horse

TOTAL (for Free Deployment)

15 x Afghan Horse (90)

1 x Zamburak (8)

Total points (98)