Sphacteria, 425 B.C.
A game by Frédéric Bey, translation by Craig Ambler

Sphacteria is an historical strategic game for two players which recreates the battles both land and sea for the control of Pylos and the island of Sphacteria, during the Peloponnesian War.

0. Generalities

Errata since VV#95 are highlighted in **red**.

0.1 Dice
The game uses two dice of 6 sides (d6) and a bowl.

0.2 Map
The map is divided into zones (identified by the letters A to V), which regulate the placement and movement of the pieces. The zones are either Land Zones (clear terrain, difficult terrain and beach), Maritime Zones (sea and strait). Four "Bases Arrieres" whichare used to deploy reinforcements: BTA (Athenian Land Base, which consists of zones 0 and P), BMA (Athenian Naval Base, which consists of Zone A), BTS (Spartan Land Base, which consists of N), BMS (Spartan Naval Base, which consists of Zone B).

0.3 Game Scales
One force point (PF) represents the following unit types; 1 trireme, 25 hoplites or 100 archers.

1. Combat Units, leaders and events
Each side's leader and combat units are indicated by the colour of the character font on the counter; blue for Athens and yellow for Sparta. The colour of the vertical bands allow the distinguishing of Allies or supplements for each of the two camps (Messenians for Athens and Helots for Sparta). The star * on some of the counters (units and leaders) indicate that they gain a bonus.

1.1 Combat Units
The combat units are represented by double sided counters (see Legend).
- the front of units shows the values when they are at full strength, the reverse the values reduced
- each unit is only one type (T for Triremes, H for Hoplites, P for Peltasts or A for Archers), this identification letter and Force Strength (PF) represents their effectiveness (see 0.3). Certain units possess a bonus shown by a *.
- The land units (H, P and A) all have a movement capacity of 3 movement point (PM). The Naval Units (T) have a unlimited movement capacity. The movement capacities are shown on the counters.

1.2 Leaders
- The Leaders are represented by single sided counters (see Legend). Certain Leaders possess a bonus shown by a *. Leaders have a movement capacity of 4 movement point (PM) in land zones and unlimited in martime zones (see 3.1). This is not shown on the counters.
- If at any time a leader is found to be alone in a zone occupied by enemy units, it is eliminated (captured).

1.3 Events
The Events are double sided and show the Event Title and the advantage with also a mark of identification (see 6.)

1.4 Markers
They are used to show the turn, the number of actions and the level of supply for each side and are recorded on the relevant chart.

2. Game Sequence

One game consists of 7 turns of play.
Each turn composes of the following sections.

A – Selection of Events

All the available Event counters are placed in a bowl. Each player takes out 2 in secret. The Events with an identification number in Red are removed from play once they have been used, the others are replaced in the bowl as they are played.
Note: The Event "Depart de Brasidas (10)" on the front and "Tempete de mer (20)" is only removed if the front "Depart de Bradisas" has been played. The playing of "Tempete de Mer" does not automatically imply the removal of the event from playing again.

B – Action Points (PA)

Both players throw 2d6. The player throwing the higher number wins the initiative. If this throw is equal the player with the most PF value of Naval Units gains the initiative. In the case of this again being equal the Spartan player gains initiative.
However, every player still receives as many PA as the total of the 2d6 thrown, divided by two and rounded up. Markers "Actions Spartae" and "Actions Athenes" are put on the chart to point out the available number of PA for both camps. Example: Sparta throws 8 and Athens 5. Sparta gains 4 PA of actions, Athens acquires 3 PA.

C – Activation Phase

The reinforcements of either side, that arrive during the present turn (historical reinforcements) or one caused by the result of Events (optional reinforcements) are placed on the map (see 7.1 and 7.2).
The player who is using initiative in any Action Phase is the Active Player (the other player is the Passive Player).

Over the course of the phase the active player carries out his actions in the following order:

1/ he must announce the total number of PA (1 minimum up to all his still available PA as maximum) that he is going to spend in the course of the Action Phase. He must deduct AP according to their expense and move the marker on the chart to record.
2/ he can activate zones on the map occupied by units of his side and move (see 3.) all or part of his units and leaders located in this zone. The cost is 1 PA per activated zone if it contains a leader and 2 PA if it does not contain a leader;
3/ he must perform attacks (see 4.) in the zones where there are units of both sides (Cost is 1 PA for all attacks)
The active player and the passive player can play events at any time, within the limits of one event set per the Action Phase. Note: Reinforcement Numbers used before the first stage of actions do not cost against the limit.
The passive player then becomes the active player and performs the Action Phases in his turn.
When one of both players has no more PA, he must pass and let his adversary perform possibly perform an Action Phase. Note: a player cannot pass deliberately, he can only make this choice when he has no more PA.
When both players have spent all their PA, the Activation Stage is ended. Note: At this instant, there must be no zone in which contains units of both sides because all battles must inevitably have been finished.

D – Adjustment Phase

The player who has the Initiative carries out his adjustments first:
- he can keep a maximum of one event and must return all excess events back into the bowl;
- he can turn over as many weakened units to full strength as he has leaders having a bonus star at present on the map;
- he must move the marker one space towards the 0 marker supply of his side if his units are not supplied (see 5.)
The second player then carries out his adjustments. The Victory Conditions are checked (see 8.). The Turn Marker is advanced one space.

3. Movement and stacking

Movement is possible from one zone into an adjacent zone at the cost of 1 PM. As soon as a unit enters a zone occupied by at least one enemy unit, it must stop its movement in this zone.

3.1 Movement Limits
- land units cannot enter a sea or strait zone;
- naval units cannot enter a clear or difficult land zone;
- only the beach zone is accessible to both land and naval units;
- leaders can move in the land zones like land units (only if accompanied by combat units) and in the maritime zones as Naval units (on the condition of being accompanied at start and the end of movement of at least one type T unit).

3.2 Stacking Limits
Stacking is only checked after movements.
There is no stacking limit in the 4 boxes "Base camps". In the land zones (including the Beach, zone V), the stacking limit is 4 units of each side - whatever their type - per zone. In the maritime zones the stacking is unlimited, with the exception of the two strait zones (zones I and J), for which the figure shown on the map indicates the maximum number of PF of Triremes that each player can deploy in that zone. Example: in the zone Strait J - marked "20" -, the Spartan player can enter 20 PF of Triremes and the Athenian player another 20 PF as well. The limit of stacking is thus of 20 F per player and 40 PF on the whole. Note design: this limit corresponds to the number of triremes that each fleet could align in combat formation in these narrow spaces.

3.3 Naval transport
Land units and Leaders can be transported by sea from a land zone to another land zone. Note: For a Leader naval transport is similar to a land movement and limited to 4 PM. To allow this transportation each zone of sea or strait crossed must contain one unit of Allied Triremes (and no enemy Triremes). The movement is then carried out as if the crossed maritime zones were zones of clear land and at the same cost (1 PM by zone) and within the limit of one land unit transported per PF of Trireme in each maritime zone entered (Leader do not count against this limit and are transported for "free"). The retreats after combat of leaders and land units can be carried out by naval transport following these same rules. A land unit cannot end its movement in a maritime zone, even if it occupied by friendly naval units.

4. Combat
4.1 General principles of combat
A combat must take place as soon as combat units of the opposite sides are in the same zone.
The player who spends the PA (active player) to start the combat in the action phase is appointed as being the attacker. If the active player does not pay one PA to start the required combat, all his units are returned weakened to the starting zone. Note: it is thus very important to take care to preserve any PA in stock before entering into a zone occupied by enemy units.

A combat can take place only between land units of the opposing sides or naval units of the opposing sides. A land unit can never combat a naval unit and vice versa. Exception: any unit of Trireme which is on a beach is regarded as a land unit of type P and value 1 PF (regardless of its normal value in PF). It can then be attacked by a land unit. Note: the Greeks put their triremes on the beaches to shelter from storms but at the risk of making them vulnerable to destruction or capture by an enemy land attack. In the game this practice can be useful to at sea units to avoid the effect of the Event "Storm".

4.2 Engagement Tables

To resolve a combat, the attacking player follows the following procedure:

He calculates the odds, always rounding it in favour of the defender. Both the Active and Passive player can now play an event. The attacking player attacking throws 1d6, and adds or subtracts the modifiers – all of which are cumulative - and consults the result.

The results are noted in the following way: attacker damage/defender damage. The winner of the battle is indicated in bold. The leaders and combat units not eliminated from the result must leave the zone into a zone free of enemy units. The loser may be able to leave the zone via naval transport (see 3.3). If there are no zones free of enemy units adjacent, the losing units are eliminated.

• E = All the units of the combat force are eliminated.

• A = All the units of the combat force are weakened, any already weakened units are eliminated.

 • To weaken 1/4, 1/2 or 3/4 of units (number of units, not how many PF). One always rounds the number of units to be weakened in his favour with a minimum of one weakened unit at least. Example: A player who has 3 units and which must apply result 1/2 received the figure of 1.5 rounded in his favour to 1. A player who has 2 combat units and which must apply the result 1/4 obtains receives 0.5 but increased to 1, which is the minimum damage.

• R = Nothing: no losses.

The leaders of a force which undergoes a result E are also eliminated.

1d6	Strength Ratio						
	1/3 and -	1/2	2/3	1/1	3/2	2/1	3/1 and +
-1 & -	E - **R**	A - **R**	3/4 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**
0	E - **R**	3/4 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/4 – **1/4**
1	A - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/4 - **1/4**	1/4 - **1/4**
2	A - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/2 - **R**	1/4 – **R**	1/4 - **1/4**	1/4 - **1/4**	1/4 – **1/2**
3	3/4 -**R**	1/2 - **R**	1/4 – **R**	1/4 – **1/4**	1/4 -**1/4**	**1/4** - 1/4	**R** – 1/2
4	1/2 - **R**	1/4 – **1/4**	1/4 – **1/4**	1/4- **1/4**	**1/4** – 1/4	**R** – 1/2	**R** – 3/4
5	1/2 - **1/4**	1/4 -**1/4**	**1/4** – 1/4	**R** – 1/4	**R** - 1/2	**R** – 1/2	**R** – A
6	1/4 - **1/4**	**1/4** -1/4	**R**- 1/4	**R** - 1/2	**R**- 1/2	**R** – 3/4	**R** – A
7	**1/4** - 1/4	**R** – 1/4	**R** / 1/2	**R** - 1/2	**R**– 1/2	**R** – 3/4	**R** / E
8 & +	**R** - 1/2	**R** – 1/2	**R** / 1/2	**R** - 1/2	**R** - 3/4	**R** - A	**R** / E

Dice Modifiers:

 a) + the number of leaders in the attacking force with a * bonus – the number of defending leaders with a * bonus.

 b) + 1 if the attacker has at least one type H unit with a * bonus and the defender does not have H type unit with a * bonus

c) -1 if the defender least one type A unit

d) +1 if the attacker has three different types of units

e) -2 if the defender is only composed of H type units with a * bonus

f) + the number attacking units of Type T with a * bonus - less the number of defending units of type T with the * bonus

g) -1 if the combat takes place in the Beach Zone

Column Shifts

a) a shift of two columns to the right if the attacker has at least one H type unit and the defender does not have any

b) a shift of one column to the left if the attacker does not have a H type unit and the defender has at least one in his force

c) a shift of one column to the right if half or more of the units of the defender are units H Messenians or Helots (number of units not PF), a shift of one column to the left if half or more of the units of the attacker are units H Messenians or Helots (number of units not PF). Note: these shifts are cancelled if half or more of both attacking units and defending units are H Messenians or Helots

d) a shift of 2 columns to the left if the attacker entered the battle zone while crossing a fortification

e) a shift of one column to the left if the attacker entered the combat zone by using a naval transport in an adjacent maritime zone to this one.
f) a shift of one column to the left if the combat takes place in a difficult terrain zone.

Example: an attack of Pylos from the zone O is thus resolved with a shift of 3 columns towards the left, the zone in difficult land (f) and being attacked by crossing a fortification (d). An attack via a naval transport from zone I would be with a 4 columns move to the left, because of the additional shift related to naval transport (e). Modifiers related to the events: see 6.

5. Supply
The supply relates only to Athenian land units deployed in zone P (Pylos) and the Spartan land units located in zones Q, R, S and T (Sphactaria). Note: the fact that Athenian units occupy several of the 4 zones of Sphactaria does not have impact on the supply of the Spartiates units which would be located in the remaining zones of the small island. The supply is followed using the markers "Appro. ". These markers can be moved between boxes 0 to 3 of the chart. At the beginning of the game they are placed on box 3.

Checking of supply only occurs only in the following cases:

5.1 Supply of Pylos
 If at the time of the Athenian Adjustment Phase the maritime zones I and H are only occupied by Spartan Naval Units, the Athenian "Appro" marker (Provisions) is moved one box towards 0, or if not and if it is not already on box 3, it is moved of a box towards the right.

5.2 Supply of Sphacteria
 If at the time of the Spartan Adjustment Phase the maritime zones I and J are only occupied by Athenian naval units, the Spartan "Appro" marker. (Provisioning) is moved one box towards 0, if not and if it is not already moved, it is moved of a box towards the right. At the time of the Spartan Adjustment Phase, before the checking of the supply and the application of its effects, the Spartan player can try to use his Helots units to supply the island of Sphacteria. To attempt this throw 1d6 for each unit of Helots located in of zone U or in zone V. If the result is even, the marker of supply is increased by 1. If the result is odd, the Helot unit is turned over to on its weakened face (it is eliminated, if it is already weakened).

5.3 Capitulation
If the Athenian supply reaches 0, the Athenian land units located in zone P are eliminated. If the Spartan supply reaches 0, the Spartans units located in the zones Q, R, S and T are eliminated. Note: this elimination corresponds to the Historical events.
A capitulation has specific effects on the Victory Conditions (see 8.). So if in the course of games all the units of Athens leave or are driven out (following a combat) of Pylos or - in the same way - if all the units of Sparta leave or are driven out (following a combat) of Sphacteria, the checking of the supply is suspended (without capitulation). It can begin again, with markers of "Appro" moved to position 3, as soon as the conditions listed into 5.1 or 5.2 are with now in place.

6. Events
Each player can use an event if the colour of the font corresponds to his sides colour (blue or yellow) or a neutral colour (grey). A player thus can, according to its colour coding, use either event on the chit or only be able to use one of them. He can never use an event which has the colour of the opposing side. If the two players play two events at the same time, their effects can sometimes be cancelled or be accumulated.

#1 Periplous: Athenian tactic of envelopment allowing of ramming the enemies on the flank or rear. This event gives a shift on the Combat Table of 2 columns towards the right if it is played by the attacker or 2 columns towards the left, if it is played by the defender. This event cannot be played if the combat is in the maritime zones H, I and J which are too narrow for this tactic.

#2 Kuklos: A defensive circle formation used by the fleets with numerical inferiority. This event gets a shift of 1 column towards the left with the defender during a combat between triremes in any maritime zone. It can never be played by the attacker.

#3 Diekplous: Attacks in column to pierce the enemy line. This event gets a shift of 1 column towards the right, when played by the attacker in a combat between triremes in any maritime zone. It can never be played by the defender.

#4 Epibates: Marines. Gain a +2 for the attacker or a -1 for the defender on the Combat Table during a combat between triremes, in any maritime zone. The two players can use this event at the same time, one works against the other so the result is +1 in favour of the attacker.

#5 Archers: This event makes it possible to prohibit the entry in a zone where at least one unit of archer (A) is to any unfriendly land units or leader during the Action Phase in progress. To use the event place the chit in the zone to locate it.

#6 Peltastes: This event, when played during a combat between land units including at least one attacking unit of Peltasts (P), cancels the dice modifier "e" and the column modifiers "a" and "f" on the Combat Table. It can never be played by the defender.

#7 Spartiates! : This event, when he is played during a combat between land units including at least a unit of Spartan Hoplites gains the Spartan player one additional column shift in his favour on the Combat Table (towards the left if he is defending, towards the right if he is attacking).

#8 Combination Attack: This event, when played during a combat, makes it possible to add half (round up the result) of the PF value of friendly combat units located in an adjacent zone during the calculation of the combat strengths. These units are not moved, they remain in their zone. At the time of a land combat, the adjacent zone selected for the combined attack must also be a land zone and the PF added to come from land units. It is the same with a naval maritime zone and units for a naval action. This event can be played by the attacker or the defender.

#9 Leader Injured: This event, when played during land or naval combat, makes it possible to cancel the * bonus of enemy leaders for the calculation of the diceroll modifier "a" on the Combat Table.

#10 Departure of Brasidas: When this event is played, the Brasidas leader is immediately withdrawn from the play. This event can be played only in Adjustment Phase. It is then withdrawn from the game.

 #11 Nicias vs. Cléon: When this event is played, Cléon is recalled to Athens through the schemes of his rival Nicias, the Cleon units is withdrawn from the game and is replaced by the Sophoclès unit. This event can be played only in the Adjustment Phase. It is then withdrawn from the game.

#12 Delayed Reinforcements: This event can be played in the Activation Phase, before the first phase of action of each turn, and delays for one turn for historical reinforcement or cancels an optional reinforcement relating to events #13 or #14 when used by the enemy.

#13 Optional Reinforcements 1: This event can be played in the Activation Phase, before the first phase of action of any given turn to gain the reinforcements RO1 to his own side (see 7)

 #14 Optional Reinforcements 2: This event can be played in Activation Phase, before the first phase of action of any given turn to gain the reinforcements RO2 to his own side (see 7)

#15 Recup. x1 (Recuperation): This event can be played during the Adjustment Phase to return one weakened unit to its full strength.

#16 Recup. x2 (Recuperation): This event can be played at the time of the Adjustment Phase to return two units weakened to its full strength.

#17 Supply: This event can be played at during the Adjustment Phase to remove the need for checking the supply of the units of his side and its effects (the "Appro" marker of its side remains on the box where it is).

#18 Supply Helots: This event can be played by the Spartan player during the Adjustment Phase to remove the need for checking of the supply of the Spartan units (the Spartan "Appro" marker remains inn the box where it is)

#19 Truce: This event can be played by the player Spartan, at the time of the Adjustment Phase, before checking of the supply, to remove their need to check for supply for the Spartan units and places the Spartan "Appro" marker into space 3 on the Supply Chart automatically.

#20 Storm at sea: This event can be played during the Adjustment Phase. Each player throw 1d6 for each naval unit which is on the map in a maritime zone: a unit of full strength is turned over onto its weakened face and any already weakened units are eliminated if the result is 5 or 6. Particular case: Zone H (Port), only a 6 result causes weakening or elimination. Any naval units deployed on the beach (zone V) do not have to carry out this test.

#21 Fire of Sphacteria: This event can be played during the Adjustment Phase. The chit is placed on one ofthe 4 Sphacteria zones to indicate that the vegetation of the small island has been burnt. At the beginning of the following turn the 4 zones of the island (Q, R, S and T) and all are automatically regarded as zones of clear land.

#22 Desertion from Messenia: This event can be played in the Adjustment Phase to permanently withdraw a unit of Messenian Hoplites.

7. Set-up
7.1 Athenes
Démosthénès, Athenian Hoplites H1, Messenian Hoplites H6, Archers A1 in P
Athenian Triremes T1 (reduced) in I
Athenian reinforcements:
Turn 3: Historical Reinforcement 1 (RH1) : Shophoclès, Eurymédon, Athenian Triremes T2, T3, T4, T5 and T6 in BMA, Athenian Hoplites H2, H3 and H4, Messenian Hoplites H7 in BTA
Turn 5 : Historical Reinforcement 2 (RH2) : Cléon, Athenian Triremes T7 and T8 en BMA, Athenian Hoplites H5, Archers A2, Peltasts P1 and P2 in BTA. Sophoclès and Eurymédon are removed from the game.
Optional Reinforcement (Renforts optionnels) 1 (RO1) : Peltasts P3 in BTA
7.2 Sparta
Epitadas, Styphon, Brasidas, Spartan Hoplites H1, H2 and H3, Helots H5, H6 and H7 in BTS
Spartan reinforcement:
Turn 2 : Historical Reinforcement 1 (RH1) : Trasymédidas, Spartan Triremes T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7 in BMS
Optional Reinforcement (Renforts optionnels) 1 (RO1) : Helots H8 en BTS
Optional Reinforcement (Renforts optionnels) 2 (RO2) : Spartan Hoplites H4 and Helots H9 en BTS

8. Victory

8.1 Total Victory

During the game:

If during the course of the game units of one side capitulate (see 5.3), the opposing side gains a total victory immediately, a condition of this capitulation requires the elimination of at least two combat units and of at least one of type H. The game is then finished.
At the end of the Game:
To gain a total victory at the end of the game, a player must have at the end of Turn 7 at least one H type unit in the following three zones: P (Pylos), Q and T (Sphacteria). For the Athenians, these units of the type H can be either Athenian or Messenians, for Sparta these H type units must be Spartans (and not Helots).

8.2 Victories marginal

If no total victory is reached, the level of victory for the two sides is decided in the following way, by calculating Victory Points VP:
-        5 VP for the occupation at the end of the game of each the zones P, Q and T by at least one H unit type (of which none are H Helots for the Spartan side);
-        2 VP per eliminated enemy naval unit;
-        1 VP per eliminated enemy land unit;
-        1 VP per enemy leader killed during a combat or captured.

Example: a unit having capitulated (see 5.3) without causing total victory or a unit eliminated by the event n°22 is regarded as eliminated for calculation from the VP. The two players compare their VP. If the difference between the two sides lies between 0 and 3 VP (included), the result is a draw.
If the difference between the two camps is higher than 3 VP, the camp which has the most VP gains a Tactical Victory.
If the number of VPs of the winner is double the number of VP of the defeated side, that side has gained a Strategic Victory.