



When I heard that Hank Edley and Dave Pauwels were going to be putting out a line of Etruscans under the banner of Gorgon Studios I was excited to see what they came up with, and with the prospect of having another in-period foe for my already existing collection of ancient Greeks. Then Hank asked me if I would be willing to take some of their Etruscan 1<sup>st</sup> Class hoplites and paint them up as something other than Etruscans, as there is a lot of overlap between Etruscan and Greek hoplites of the period. Of course I jumped at the chance, and Hank very kindly sent some miniatures along.

Upon opening the package Hank sent, the miniatures looked great. The sculpts were clean, well-posed, and had nicely detailed features. Sculptor Steve Saleh really did a sharp job on these models. I was also pleased to see a few small but helpful features, such as the grooves under the arms of the hoplites thrusting their spears forward, and the nibs on the backs of the shields – both of these features would help create a more secure connection when gluing on shields and weapons.

So what was I to do with these guys? The obvious choice was to paint them up as Greeks, but Greeks from where? I spent some time thinking about various ancient Greek city-states and quickly decided that they should be from one of the Greek colonies in Italy. That way they would be right at home battling the Etruscans the line is intended to represent. In addition, any Italic flavor in the miniatures (or additional ones



to come) would make some sense, and I could justify getting some of the more obviously Etruscan/Italian miniatures to act as the occasional allied Italian tribe!

So I had a general geographic location in mind (Magna Graecia), but I wanted to pin it down to a specific city. The city I chose was Cumae.

Probably founded sometime in the eighth century BC, Cumae became one of the leading Greek cities in Italy and gained some fame as the seat of the Cumaean Sibyl, a prophetess who features larger in Roman myth and legend rather than Greek. Two of the primary reasons I chose Cumae as the city these miniatures would represent were 1: The Cumaeans fought against the Etruscans on several occasions, and 2: The fairly wide availability of online images of coins from ancient Cumae, which would give great inspiration for shield designs that could be specifically linked to the city.



Notable conflict between Greek Cumae and the Etruscans occurred in 524, c. 505, and 474 BC, with the Etruscans on the losing end of all three engagements. The leading Cumaean figure in the battles of 524 and 505 was Aristodemus Malacus. First depicted as a champion of the lower classes and then as an oppressive tyrant, Malacus is an interesting character, a perfect general for my Cumaean army!

Now that I had chosen a city for these hoplites, the real work of getting the miniatures ready and painted was next. The miniatures were so nicely cast that clean up was easy. Scraping some light mold lines with an old dull X-acto knife and filing the bases flat was quickly accomplished. I glued the miniatures to their bases using an epoxy glue.



I've taken to using either metal washers or the thin steel wargaming figure bases available from several manufacturers. I like the magnetic quality of both types of basing (making movement trays and transport easy!), and the low profile. Because I finish the bases as the last step of my figure-painting, I can use them to hold the miniatures as I paint.



My color choices were, for the most part, fairly simple. Off-whites, light browns and the occasional red for cloth, bronze for the armor, and white, black, reds and browns for the horsehair crests on the helmets. I did indulge myself with some blues and even purples(!) for a few of the hoplites - the wealthiest members of the phalanx!

As mentioned earlier, shield symbols were primarily inspired by designs found on ancient Cumaean coinage. There are a number of commercial ancient coin dealer websites out there of some use, but one of the best free online sources I found was the UK Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum site at:

<http://www.s110120695.websitehome.co.uk/SNG>. I tried to limit myself to using those designs found on coins that date to roughly the late sixth and early fifth centuries BC,



the period during which hoplites of this appearance would have likely been in the Etruscan and Greek armies in Italy. For the sake of increased variety I included some purely conjectural designs. There are some common themes running through the shield design scheme though, including imagery related to; the sea, the area of Italy in which Cumae was situated (Campania), and to painted pottery imported to

Italy from Greece during the relevant period.

Paints used were mostly inexpensive craft paints (Delta Ceramcoat and Apple Barrel) widely available in major US chain stores. All figures were primed

black. Base finishing was simply done with painted and drybrushed sand collected from the great outdoors, and a bit of Woodland Scenics® static grass (Harvest Gold color).

In the end, I was very pleased with how the miniatures turned out. The quality of the sculpting and casting makes it a lot easier for a mediocre painter like me to end up with something I can be proud of putting on the



tabletop, and painting these miniatures was downright fun. I am looking forward to Gorgon's future releases, and I hope this write-up inspires other people to realize the multi-use capability of Gorgon's 1<sup>st</sup> Class Etruscan hoplites for use in other armies, including early Romans but especially Greeks!