

Battle of Klyastitzy (Jakobovo)

Age of Eagles Scenario
by GRW, 2010

SETTING

Date: 1 August 1812, 7:00 AM

Location: 50 miles northwest of Vitebsk, Russia

Combatants: French Empire vs. Russian Empire

History: By late July 1812, Napoleon's main army closed in on Smolensk, and his northern flank was protected by Oudinot's II Corps. Since the start of the campaign, Oudinot had faced little opposition from his opponent, General Wittgenstein. Thus, it was a great surprise to the French in the last days of July when the Russians finally appeared ready to fight. On July 28, French and Russian cavalry clashed near the village of Jakobovo, and a heavy infantry skirmish unfolded in the subsequent days. Despite Russian pressure, the French still held the village.

By the night of July 31, Wittgenstein concentrated his entire corps in front of the Jakobovo plateau, ready to attack at dawn. Slow to appreciate his opponent's new-found aggressiveness, Oudinot had left one third of his corps behind at Drissa, guarding his supplies and artillery park. Even without one of his divisions, Oudinot still outnumbered Wittgenstein by August 1, 1812.



Nicholas Oudinot

French Orders: Clear the road to St. Petersburg by destroying the enemy force.



Peter Wittgenstein

Russian Orders: Check the French advance by delivering a stinging blow to Oudinot.

Victory points: Refer to the *Age of Eagles* 'Casualty Points Chart' to determine victory points.

Game length: 7:00 AM until 5:00pm (20 turns, but see Scenario Rule #2)

AFTERMATH

Skirmishing around Jakobovo began before dawn. Legrand's division launched a frontal attack in the early morning, but was driven back. For his counter-attack, Wittgenstein deployed his infantry in attack columns for a bayonet assault. Well-positioned French artillery pounded the Russian infantry from the plateau, but the weight of the Russian attack carried Jakobovo. Oudinot retreated to the sandy hills in front of the Nitschtscha River, but when Russian cavalry threatened his flank at Gvozdy, the French retreated across the river in good order. As the French attempted burning the bridge, Wittgenstein ordered his grenadiers to storm the bridge. After a bitter contest, the Pavlov grenadiers captured the bridge and forced Oudinot to order a complete withdraw from the field. Dusk stopped Sasonov's pursuit and the French would not seriously threaten St. Petersburg again. The battle cost both sides roughly 5,000 men.

SCENARIO RULES

1. The French deploy first.
2. The scenario ends before 5:00pm if the French gain uncontested control of Okhova, or if the Russians cross more than one brigade over the Nitschtscha River.
3. Infantry or cavalry may attempt to locate a ford along the sandy banks of the Nitschtscha River. To find a ford, a brigade should roll a single D6. On a roll of "1-3" no ford is found, "4" is a temporary ford for that unit only, and a roll of "5-6" locates a permanent ford which can be used by other infantry or cavalry. Artillery may only ever cross at the bridge.
4. Cavalry and artillery may not enter the woods.
5. All French cuirassiers are rated "armored heavy cavalry."
6. Oudinot and Wittgenstein are both +0 for initiative rolls.

TERRAIN & WEATHER

The gaming table should be four feet long by four feet wide, laid out according to the accompanying map. Urban areas offer +1 advantages to defending units in melee and a -1 benefit when under fire. The Nitschtscha River may only be crossed at the bridge in column formation, unless infantry or cavalry attempt to ford as noted in Rule #2. Movement along roads offers full movement benefits. The woods on the battlefield are dense, and count as rough going for infantry. Cavalry and artillery cannot enter the woods. The weather is clear and dry.

DEPLOYMENT

Units set up according to the accompanying map in whichever formation the commander sees fit. Batteries may begin limbered or unlimbered, and commanders must be deployed within 12 inches of their commands. Oudinot and his artillery and cavalry reserve may deploy anywhere on the table. DOUMERC deploys within 4" of Klyastitzy.

Corps commander WITTGENSTEIN begins off table with BERG and KAKHOFFSKI. They may enter within 6" of Okhova at any time the Russian player desires. SASONOV enters on the road at Okhova at 10:00am (Russian Turn 7). All Russian infantry entering the table must arrive in assault column formation—this is how Wittgenstein deployed historically.

SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers, each cavalry stand 180 troopers, and artillery stands a battery of 6-10 guns. Ground scale is one inch to 125 yards, and this battlefield is fairly crowded! Players desiring more space may expand the board to 6'x4', although this takes away from the densely-packed ferocity of the battle.

Notes on Sources

The Battle of Klyastitzy, also known as the Battle of Jakobovo, is one of the lesser known engagements of the Russian campaign. It should hold greater historical importance, because had Oudinot defeated Wittgenstein soundly, the road to St. Petersburg would have been open to the French. Instead, the French were forced onto the permanent defensive around Polotsk, where Wittgenstein would face them on two occasions. The OOB and map for this scenario were taken from George Nafziger's definitive *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia* (1988). Nafziger's battle narrative, pp. 134-141, is also very detailed. The OOBs are quite accurate, although a handful of the brigade commanders on the Russian side are speculative. Also see Nigel Nicolson, *Napoleon 1812* (1985); Richard K. Riehn, *1812: Napoleon's Russia Campaign*.

French Order of Battle

LOUDINOT II CORPS

LOUDINOT

II Corps Idr

Legrand 6th Division Idr

Albert E 8/6/4 Sk light
Maison R 8/6/4 Sk line
Moreau R 7/5/3 Sk line
Pamplona R 7/6/4 Sk line (Portugese)
Light Foot Artillery #1 & 2

Verdier 8th Division Idr

Lorencez E 8/6/4 Sk light
Vives R 8/6/4 Sk line
Pouget R 12/9/6 Sk line
Light Foot Artillery #3 & 4

Doumerc 3rd Cuirassier Div. Idr

Berkheim E 4/3/2 HC cuirassier
L'Hertier E 4/3/2 HC cuirassier
Doulembourg E 3/-/2 HC cuirassier

Castex R 8/6/4 LC chasseurs

Reserve Light Horse Artillery #5
Reserve Heavy Foot Artillery #6

Russian Order of Battle

WITTGENSTEIN I CORPS

WITTGENSTEIN

I Corps Idr

Berg 1st Division Idr

Prince of Siberia R 7/5/4 line
Loukoff R 6/4/3 line
Baikov R 7/5/3 Sk jägers
Light Foot Artillery #1 & 2
Heavy Foot Artillery #3 & 4

Koulnieff Advance Division Idr

Denissiev E 7/5/3 Sk jägers
Grodno E 4/3/2 LC hussars
Light Horse Artillery #6

Kakhoffski 2nd Division Idr

Vlastov E 6/-/3 Sk grenadiers
Bistrom E 4/-/2 Sk grenadiers
Balk E 5/3/2 HC dragoons
Light Horse Artillery #5

Sasonov Reserve Division Idr

Harpe R 5/3/2 line
Helfrich R 6/4/3 line
Repnin E 5/3/2 HC dragoons
Light Foot Artillery #7 & 8

MAP & DEPLOYMENT

