

# The Siege of Danzig

Age of Eagles Scenario  
by GRW, 2010

## SETTING

**Date:** 12 May 1807, 2:00 PM

**Location:** 2 miles north of Danzig, Prussia

**Combatants:** French Empire vs. Kingdom of Prussia & Russian Empire

**History:** Following his bloody victory at Eylau, Napoleon sought to consolidate his position in East Prussia. Several port cities along the Baltic refused to surrender, so the Emperor dispatched Marshal Lefevbre's X Corps to lay siege. By mid-March the French surrounded over 11,000 Prussian troops at Danzig, under the stubborn command of General Friedrich von Kalkreuth. Both sides settled in for a long siege--one of the few traditional sieges of the era.

Although Marshal Lefevbre lacked any experience in siege warfare, he slowly strangled the Prussian defenses, eventually cutting the enemy garrison into two--the main Prussian body inside the fortress of Danzig, and a much smaller garrison north of the city, holding a fort at the mouth of Vistula River.

Much to everyone's surprise, on May 10 a flotilla of naval transports appeared along the Baltic, carrying over 8,000 Russian reinforcements, sent to lift the siege. As the Russians disembarked at the mouth of the Vistula, the French suddenly found themselves precariously surrounded.



*Francois Lefevbre*

**French Orders:** Do not allow this Russian relief effort to interfere with our siege! Two corps are en route to aid you.



*Nikolay Kamensky*

**Russian Orders:** Break through the French lines and make contact with the Prussians at Danzig. We must secure Holm Island!

**Victory points:** One point for every "worn" enemy unit, and two points for "spent" or destroyed. Two points for uncontested control of Weichselmunde, and three points for Holm Island.

**Game length:** Russian 3:30 PM until 8:00 PM (9 turns)

## AFTERMATH

Historically, General Kamensky did not begin his attack on May 12. Instead, he made the fatal mistake of waiting several days, which allowed time for additional French reinforcements to arrive. In fairness to the Russian commander, he found himself unable to communicate with General Kalkreuth in Danzig, making coordination nearly impossible. When the Russians finally attacked at 4:00am on May 15, they were promptly beaten back, losing over 2,000 men. Without control of the vital passage at Holm Island, General Kalkreuth soon surrendered on May 24, under generous terms by Napoleon, who was eager to end the lengthy siege.

## SCENARIO RULES

1. The French deploy first.
2. Any French unit may elect to begin the scenario "dug in" behind hasty earthworks. Earthworks confer a +2 advantage in melee and a -2 benefit when under fire.
3. KALKREUTH's Prussian garrison at Danzig may conduct defensive fire and may defend themselves in melee, but cannot initiate movement or conduct offensive fire. In order to make contact with this garrison, the Russian commander must have at least one brigade within 12" of Danzig's fortress walls. If this contact is made, KALKREUTH's command may activate normally.
4. Due to a dire shortage of powder, any Prussian artillery which rolls a "10" when shooting will be out of ammunition for the remainder of the game following that final shot.
5. LEFEBVRE is +0 for initiative rolls; KAMENSKY is -1. Russians begin with initiative Turn 1.

## TERRAIN & WEATHER

The gaming table should be six feet long by four feet wide, laid out according to the accompanying map. Urban areas inside Danzig offer +1 advantages to defending units in melee and a -1 benefit when under fire. The fortress walls of Danzig and Weichselmunde confer a +3/-3 benefit, making them very strong defensive bastions. The Vistula River may only be crossed at the bridges. The canal may be crossed, but counts as rough going. The marshes outside Danzig also count as rough going. The weather is cool and clear.

## DEPLOYMENT

Units set up according to the accompanying map in any formation. Batteries may begin limbered or unlimbered, and commanders must be deployed within 12" of their commands.

This battle is somewhat of a "what if" scenario, because Kamensky did not begin his attack until May 15, by which time Lannes' corps had already arrived in full. If Kamensky had pressed his advantage immediately on the late afternoon of May 12, he may have broken the siege.

KALKREUTH begins inside Danzig's fortress walls. KAMENSKY begins within 4" of Weichselmunde, but the detached Prussian forces must begin inside the fort's earthworks.

Marshal LEFEBVRE and his unattached corps cavalry and artillery deploy within 6" of point "B."

LOUDINOT's division arrived just as the Russians disembarked at the mouth of the Vistula River. Starting on the French 4:00pm turn (Turn 2), the French commander should roll a D6. On a roll of "5" or "6" OUDINOT arrives in march column at point "A" or "B." On a roll of "1-4," he fails to arrive that turn. The French commander may roll again the next turn, still needing a "5" or "6."

## SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers and each cavalry stand 180 troopers. For this scenario, artillery is scaled at 1 stand per 18+ guns, due to the large number of guns. Ground scale is one inch to 150 yards and one complete turn represents thirty minutes of historical time.

## Notes on Sources

The siege of Danzig holds a somewhat unique place in Napoleonic history as one of the very few traditional, protracted sieges outside of the Spanish theater; however, very few sources cover the siege in detail. George Nafziger offers a somewhat accurate picture of the French OOB, but the Russo-Prussian OOB is entirely speculative at the brigade level. For a description of the siege, see Chapter II of Francis L. Petre's, *Napoleon's Campaign in Poland, 1806-07* (1907).

## French Order of Battle

**LEFEBVRE**  
French X Corps

### LEFEBVRE

X Corps Idr

**Michaud** 1st Division Idr  
Schramm R 7/5/4 Sk line  
Puthod R 9/7/5 Sk line  
Dufour R 6/5/3 line (Saxon)

**Prince of Baden** 2nd Division Idr  
Closmann R 7/6/4 line (Baden)  
von Vincenti R 7/6/4 line (Baden)  
  
von Polenz R 7/6/4 HC mixed (Saxon)  
Pierre R 6/4/3 LC chasseurs  
Heavy Foot Artillery Reserve #3 & 4

**Gardanne** 4th Division Idr  
Menard R 6/4/3 Sk line  
Dupres R 5/4/3 line (Saxon)  
Light Foot Artillery #1

**Dombrowski** 3rd Polish Legion Idr  
Kosinski R 6/4/2 Sk line  
Sokolnicki R 6/4/2 Sk line  
Light Foot Artillery #2

(from Lannes' V Corps)

**Oudinot** 1st Division Idr  
Conroux E 5/3/2 Sk grenadiers  
Albert R 6/4/3 Sk line

## Russo-Prussian Order of Battle

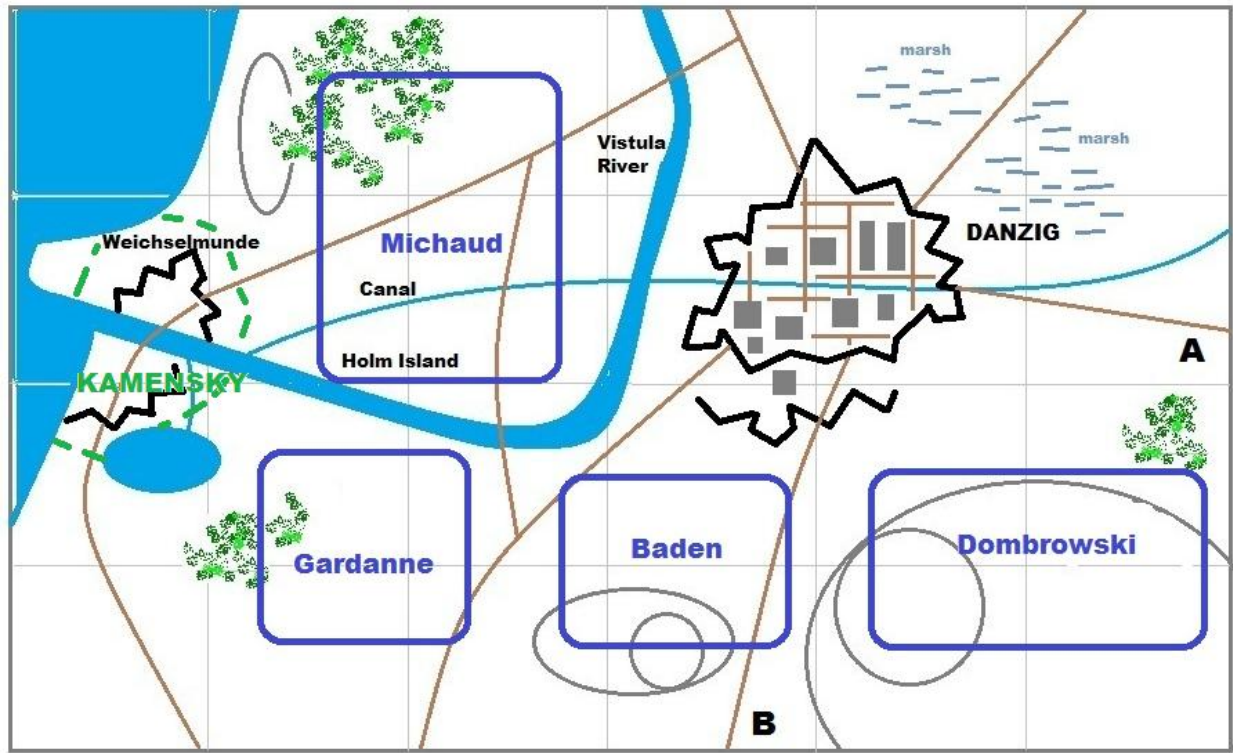
**KAMENSKY**  
Russian Relief Force

**Kamensky** 14th Division Idr  
Alexiev R 8/6/4 line  
Gersdorff R 8/6/4 line  
Pirch R 6/4/3 Sk jäger

(detached Prussians in Weichselmünde)  
Haber R 6/4/3 line  
Heavy Foot Artillery #1-3

**Kalkreuth** Danzig division Idr  
Schmidt R 7/5/3 line  
Zeller R 7/5/3 line  
Neumann R 7/5/3 line  
Polian R 5/4/3 LC hussars  
Danzig volunteers C 8/7/5 militia  
Heavy Foot Artillery #4-12

## MAP & DEPLOYMENT



**\*\*Terrain Note:** Players may wonder why there is not a more direct road and bridge connecting Danzig and Holm Island. Such a direct connection did once exist, but French sappers destroyed the bridge after seizing the crucial island. Thus, Danzig is now more isolated and difficult to access from Holm Island. This will make any Prussian attempts to sally out of Danzig's fortress much more difficult to execute.