

Battle of Vyazma

Age of Eagles Scenario
by GRW, 2007

SETTING

Date: 3 November 1812, 10:00 AM

Location: 100 miles west of Moscow, Russia

Combatants: French Empire & allies vs. Russian Empire

History: By November 2 Napoleon's army stretched over 60 miles along the Smolensk road. Harassed by Russian Cossacks, in need of fresh supplies, and beleaguered by stragglers, the Grande Armee was in danger of disintegration. Napoleon left Moscow with 100,000 men but by reaching Vyazma had only 60,000 effectives. On the morning of November 3, Russian General Mikhail Miloradovich saw an opportunity to destroy the French rearguard east of Vyazma.

Over 3,000 Russian cavalry severed the head of Davout's I Corps along the main road, while 5,000 Cossacks and 4,000 infantry attacked the French from the rear. Russian artillery bombarded the road from nearby heights and Davout's rearguard faced utter destruction. Suddenly, Eugene's IV Corps turned back to break the Russian trap and save Davout.



Eugene de Beauharnais

French Orders: Restore communication with Davout and oversee the safe passage of all units through Vyazma.



Mikhail Miloradovich

Russian Orders: Capture or destroy Davout's corps and recapture Vyazma to cut-off the French retreat.

Victory points: Refer to the *Age of Eagles* 'Casualty Points Chart' to determine victory points. The French receive one point for every "unspent" unit of Davout's corps that marches off the western edge of the map at Vyazma.

Game length: French 8:00 AM until Russian 7:30 PM (23 turns, but see "*Scenario Rules*")

AFTERMATH

Both Eugene and Davout came under increasing harassment, and Russian cavalry began exploiting the gap between the French corps. Ney and Poniatowski turned back from Vyazma to assist in the rearguard efforts. Miloradovich's trap might have totally destroyed the French if Kutuzov had committed additional reinforcements, but he dispatched only a lone cavalry corps. Even with limited resources, Miloradovich used his overwhelming artillery advantage to devastate the retreating French and he pursued them into the burning remains of Vyazma proper. Ultimately, nearly 30,000 French and 25,000 Russians saw action, and while Davout did manage to escape, the French lost almost 7,000 casualties and 4,000 prisoners. A tactical draw, the Battle of Vyazma crushed French morale and signaled the beginning of the end.

SCENARIO RULES

1. EUGENE, PONIATOWSKI, and COMPANS are Charismatic.
2. This scenario officially has 23 turns, the historical length of the engagement. However, the game automatically ends in additional three cases: (1) The Russian player has undisputed control over Vyazma; (2) All French units have exited the board via Vyazma; (3) Players agree to stop playing. Whenever the scenario ends, all French units left on the board are automatically considered captured.
3. The French deploy first.
4. The French have no overall commander, since none of the corps commanders would agree to submit themselves to the orders of another in the absence of Napoleon. For this reason, the French suffer a -2 modifier when rolling for initiative, while Miloradovich is +1.

TERRAIN & WEATHER

The gaming table should be eight feet long by four feet wide, laid out according to the accompanying map. The streams and marshes are rough going impassable by artillery. The woods also count as rough going, but are sparse enough to allow artillery movement. Topographically, the stream and marsh areas were in lower depressions, if players want to model this on their tabletops. Urban areas offer +1 advantages to defending units in melee and a -1 benefit when under fire. Movement along roads offers full movement benefits. The weather is cold and clear, without snow. Heavy snows did not begin until November 6, 1812.

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. EUGENE begins with his corps in march column on the way into Vyazma. On the first French turn, 8:00 AM, DAVOUT enters within 6" of point A. PONIATOWSKI arrives from Vyazma at 9:30 (Turn 4) and NEY arrives at 10:00am.

KORFF and SIEVERS may deploy within 12" of Fedorovskoie. PASKEVICH arrives from point A at 9:00am (Turn 3). PLATOV arrives within 12" of point A or D at 9:30am. OSTERMANN-TOLSTOY appears within 6" of point C at 9:30am (Turn 4), while EUGENE arrives within 6" of point B at 10:00am. At 12:00pm, UVAROV also appears at B.

SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers, each cavalry stand 180 troopers, and artillery stands a battery of 8-12 guns. Ground scale is one inch to 150 yards.

Notes on Sources

The disintegration of the French army means that many liberties have been taken in designing the OOBs and approximating brigade strength. The Russian OOB is almost entirely speculative at brigade level. Players will note that brigades on both sides are very brittle, because by this stage in the campaign, both French and Russian troops were exhausted and weary. See Nigel Nicolson, *Napoleon 1812* (1985); Adam Zamoyski, *Moscow 1812* (2004); and George Nafziger, *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia* (1988).

French Order of Battle
DAVOUT, NEY, EUGÈNE, PONIATOWSKI
 I, III, IV, V CORPS

EUGENE IV Corps Idr

Orano R -/5/3 LC chasseurs
 Light Foot Artillery Reserve #1

Guilleminot 13th Division Idr

Nagel R -/5/3 Sk line
 Tissot R -/5/3 Sk line

Broussier 14th Division Idr

de Sivray R 6/5/3 Sk line
 Almeras R 6/5/3 Sk line

Pino Italian Guard Idr

Lecchi E 5/3/- Sk grenadiers (Italian)
 Triaire E -/4/2 LC dragoons (Italian)

PONIATOWSKI V Corps Idr

Kransinski E 6/4/2 Sk line (Polish)
 Kniaziewicz E -/5/2 Sk line (Polish)

DAVOUT I Corps Idr

Girardin R -/4/2 LC chasseurs
 Light Foot Artillery Reserve #2

Friant 2nd Division Idr

Dufour E -/4/2 Sk line
 de Gelder R -/5/2 Sk line

Gerard 3rd Division Idr

Baudinot R -/5/3 Sk line
 Gerard E 5/4/3 Sk line

Compans 5th Division Idr

Dupellin E -/5/3 Sk light
 Teste E -/6/3 Sk line
 Guyardet R 6/5/3 Sk line

NEY III Corps Idr

Ledru R 6/4/3 Sk line
 Razout R 6/4/3 Sk line
 Marchand R 5/4/2 Sk line
 Light Foot Artillery #3-5

Russian Order of Battle

MILORADOVICH
 "Advance Guard"

MILORADOVICH army Idr

EUGENE II Corps Idr

Eugene 4th Division (acting corps Idr)

Rossi R 6/5/3 line
 Pyshnitsky R 6/5/3 line
 Pillar R 5/3/2 Sk jägers
 Light Foot Artillery #1 & 2

Olsufiev III 17th Division Idr

Ivelich R 5/4/3 line
 Vadkovsky R 5/4/3 line
 Potemkin R 5/4/3 line
 Light Foot Artillery #3 & 4

Korff 2nd Cavalry Division Idr

Pskov R 5/4/2 HC dragoons
 Izum R -/4/2 LC uhlands
 Light Horse Artillery #5

OSTERMANN-TOLSTOY IV Corps Idr

Choglokov 11th Division Idr

Ivanov R 6/5/3 line
 Laptev R 6/5/3 line
 Bistrom R 5/3/2 Sk jägers
 Light Foot Artillery #6 & 7

Bakhmetieff 23rd Division Idr

Gurielov R 5/4/3 line
 Aleksopol R 5/4/3 line
 Ostrovsky E 5/3/2 Sk grenadiers
 Light Foot Artillery #8 & 9

Sievers 4th Cavalry Division Idr

Harkov R 5/4/2 HC dragoons
 Ahtirka R -/4/2 LC hussars
 Light Horse Artillery #10

Russian Order of Battle ...CONTINUED...

Platov	cossack division Idr
Vlasov	C 6/5/3 Irr. cossacks
Grekov	C 6/5/3 Irr. cossacks
Zhirov	C 6/5/3 Irr. cossacks

Paskevich	26th Division Idr
Bernikov	R 6/5/3 line
Savoini	R 6/5/3 line

UVAROV	1st Cavalry Corps Idr
Davydov	E 5/3/2 HC cuirassiers
Dyatkov	E 5/3/2 HC cuirassiers
Creitz	E 5/3/2 HC cuirassiers

MAP & DEPLOYMENT

