Battle of Vauchamps
Age of Eagles Scenario
by GRW, 2010

SETTING

Date: 14 February 1814, 10:00 AM
Location: 3 miles east of Montmirail, France
Combatants: French Empire vs. Kingdom of Prussia & Russian Empire

History: Driven back to the very gates of Paris in early February 1814, Napoleon may have saved his most brilliant campaign for last. In what would become known as his "Six Days Campaign," Napoleon personally guided the fragments of his army into the heart of Blucher's 120,000-man Army of Silesia. Blucher obliged the French by stretching out his forces into an attractive target, and Napoleon made short work of his enemies at Champaubert on February 10, Montmirail the next day, and Chateau-Thierry the next.

After this string of victories, Napoleon expected that Blucher would retreat, but the determined old field marshal instead advanced with a small Prussian and Russian corps. The vanguard of Blucher's column found Marshal Marmont outside the village of Vauchamps in the dawn hours of February 14. But Marmont was only the bait, as Napoleon sensed an opportunity to lure Blucher into a trap. Never one to decline a combat, Blucher took the bait and marched toward Vauchamps from the east, blissfully unaware that Napoleon was at the head of his Imperial Guard, already approaching from the west.

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

Game length: French 10:00 AM until 5:30 PM (15 turns; or see Scenario Rule #2)

AFTERMATH

By 10:00am, Marmont and Ziethen had already been skirmishing around Vauchamps for much of the morning. Around noon Blucher and the bulk of his forces passed through Fromentieres, but he was concerned to hear word that Napoleon and the Imperial Guard were on the field behind Marmont. Fear turned into panic when Grouchy's cavalry swung around the Prussian right flank, decimating Ziethen's division and then initiating another wide flanking maneuver to cut off the road at Fromentieres. Blucher ordered a full retreat by late afternoon. The French lost fewer than 1,000 men, while the allies lost roughly 4,000 in battle, and some 5,000 more when fleeing the field. Napoleon never committed the Old Guard into action, and Grouchy's cavalry pursued and harried the retreating allies until after dark.
SCENARIO RULES

1. NAPOLEON, GROUCHY, and BLUCHER are Charismatic.
2. The scenario ends at dusk (5:30pm) unless Napoleon can break the Prussian army sooner. Historically, Blucher is concerned with keeping his army intact and avoiding another costly defeat. The scenario ends early in a decisive French victory if Blucher's force suffers over 25% casualties, counting the number of stands killed or captured. Loss of a division or corps commander counts as triple (3 stands), and artillery counts as double (2 stands).
3. French cuirassiers are armored, while their Prussian counter-parts are not.
4. The Prussians deploy first.
5. NAPOLEON is +3 for initiative rolls, and BLUCHER is +1. The French start with initiative on the first turn.

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 streams count at rough going. Movement along roads offers no movement benefits due to the mud. The weather is cold and clear.

DEPLOYMENT

Units set up according to the accompanying map, in any formation they choose. Commanders must be deployed within 12 inches of their commands.

All French formations begin the scenario off-board. MARMONT enters within 12" of point "A" on the first turn, 10:00am. NAPOLEON enters with the guard at point "A" in road march column beginning at 11:30am (Turn 4). Units that are "backed-up" and cannot fit on the table will automatically arrive the following turn. GROUCHY may arrive anywhere along table edge "B" starting at 11:30 (Turn 4).

Kleist's vanguard, ZIETHEN's division, should deploy within 12" of Vauchamps. Starting at 11:30am (Turn 4), BLUCHER arrives with the remainder of KLEIST's corps, in march column at point "C." KAPSEVICH enters from point "C" in march column at 12:30pm (Turn 6). Units that are "backed-up" and cannot fit on the table will automatically arrive the following turn. UDOM arrives at "C" at 1:00pm (Turn 7).

SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers, each cavalry stand 180 troopers, and artillery stands a battery of 8-12 guns. Ground scale is typically one inch to 150 yards, but the map for this scenario is scaled closer to 120 yards.

Notes on Sources

It will be difficult for the French commander to repeat Napoleon's success at Vauchamps, largely because he will lack the element of surprise which doomed Blucher. The OOB for this battle is taken largely from George Nafziger and some liberties were taken when organizing the commands. Aside from Zieten's advance division, the rest of the Prussians have been streamlined into converged brigades for this battle. Similar liberties were taken on the French side in Marmont's corps. Alex K. Johnston's outstanding Atlas to Alison's History of Europe (1850), Plate No. 95, provides a detailed map. For narratives, see Francis L. Petre's Napoleon at Bay, 1814 (1914), pp 68-72. Also see Henry Houssaye, 1814 (1888), and David' G. Chandler's The Campaigns of Napoleon (1966), Vol. 1.
French Order of Battle

NAPOLEON

VI CORPS & IMPERIAL GUARD

NAPOLEON army ldr

MARMONT VI Corps ldr
Legrange C 7/5/3 line
Ricard R 5/4/3 Sk line
Leval C 8/6/4 line
Light Foot Artillery #1 & 2

Mortier Old Guard div. ldr
Friant E 6/-/2 Sk grenadiers
Michel E 6/-/2 Sk grenadiers

Ney Young Guard div. ldr
Meunier R 8/5/3 Sk light
Curial R 5/3/2 Sk light

Ney Young Guard div. ldr

GROUCHY I & II Cav. Corps ldr

Bordesolle 1st Cav. Div. ldr
Merlin R 4/3/2 LC chasseurs
Thiry R 4/3/2 HC cuirassiers

Desnouettes E 5/-/2 LC guard chasseurs
Laferriere E 5/-/2 HC guard dragoons
Guard Heavy Foot Artillery #4
Guard Light Horse Artillery #5

St. Germaine 2nd Cav. Div. ldr
Birkheim R 4/3/2 LC chasseurs
Blancarde R 4/3/2 HC cuirassiers

Light Horse Artillery Reserve #3

Prussian Order of Battle

BLUCHER

Elements of the ARMY OF SILESIA

BLUCHER army ldr

KLEIST II Corps ldr

Ziethen 11th Division ldr
1st Silesian Inf. R 7/4/3 line
1st Reserve Inf. C 6/4/3 landwehr
Silesian Cav. R 4/3/2 LC landwehr
Light Foot Artillery #1

von Pich R 12/9/6 line
Prinz August R 9/7/5 line
von Hacke R 7/5/3 LC uhlans
von Roder E 6/3/2 HC cuirassiers

Light Foot Artillery #2
Light Horse Artillery #3
Heavy Foot Artillery #4 & 5

KAPSEVICH X Corps ldr

Urusov 8th Division ldr
Schenschen R 5/3/2 line
Suthof R 4/3/2 Sk jägers

Turtschaninov 22nd Divison ldr
Schapskoy R 5/3/2 line
Vassilschikov R 4/3/2 Sk jägers

Light Foot Artillery Reserve #6 & 7
(converged remnants of the 8th Div.)

Udom II R -/5/2 line