The Battle of the Weisseritz (Dresden)
Age of Eagles Scenario
by GRW, 2009

SETTING

Date: 27 August 1813, 1:30 PM
Location: 1 mile southwest of Dresden, Saxony
Combatants: French Empire vs. Austrian Empire

History: In late August, Schwarzenberg converged his 200,000-man Army of Bohemia on Napoleon's defenses at Dresden--the capital of Saxony. On August 26 the allied coalition made a disjointed, piecemeal assault on the badly outnumbered French. But the city defenses held, and in the midst of a steady midnight rain, Napoleon arrived with sizeable reinforcements. Although still outnumbered, the Emperor drew up plans to attack the coalition early the following morning. He planned to hold in the center and press a vigorous offensive on both flanks.

One critical component to this aggressive plan was the rain-swollen Weisseritz River, which separated the weak allied left wing from the remainder of the army. If the French could secure the bridge at Plauen, the coalition would have no way to shift Russian reinforcements to assist the isolated Austrians.

Victory points: Refer to the Age of Eagles 'Casualty Points Chart' to determine victory points. Five points for uncontested control of the Plauen or Dölzschen bridges. The French lose one additional point for every cavalry brigade rated "worn" or "spent," to represent the high value Napoleon placed on his mounts.

Game length: French 1:30 PM until 5:00 PM (7 turns)

AFTERMATH

Rain and fog prevented major action in the morning, but Murat's cavalry drove back the Austrian line far enough for Victor's infantry to deploy. By 2:00pm Victor's corps was in full assault, bypassing heavily garrisoned towns, preferring to encircle them. When the Austrians finally attempted to fall back, Murat's large cavalry corps--some 12,000 sabres--cut them down like grass. The earlier rains ruined much of the musket powder, giving the armored French cuirassiers a terribly unfair advantage over the demoralized Austrian infantry caught in the mud. Gyulai lost nearly half of his corps by 4:00 PM--10,000 men were captured outright--but Napoleon failed to achieve such a decisive victory elsewhere on the battlefield. When Schwarzenberg finally withdrew from the field, Napoleon pursued with unusual caution.
SCENARIO RULES

1. Since the previous night, a steady rain soaked the battlefield and this had a well-documented effect on musketry for both sides. For this scenario, skirmishing is not permitted, which means the maximum range of musket fire is 2”. Also, for the duration of the game all shooting operates with half fire points. This will make musketry unusually ineffective.

2. Swollen by the rains, the Weisseritz is not passable, except at the bridges. Any unit forced to retreat into the river is automatically removed from play and considered captured.

3. The French deploy first.

4. MURAT and LIECHTENSTEIN are Charismatic.

5. All cuirassiers are rated "Armored Heavy Cavalry."

6. MURAT has a +1 modifier for initiative rolls, and GYULAI suffers a -1 modifier. French begin the game with initiative on the first turn.

TERRAIN & WEATHER

The gaming table should be six 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. Movement along roads offers no movement benefits due to the heavy mud. The weather is cool and overcast with light rain.

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. There are no reinforcements for either side.

SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers, and each cavalry stand 180 troopers. Artillery has been reduced for this scenario, so single stand now represents 8-12 guns. Ground scale is one inch to 150 yards and one complete turn represents thirty minutes of historical time. Ideally, this is a three-player scenario, although more could be accommodated.

Notes on Sources

This is a tough assignment for any Austrian player, and victory should be judged in comparison with Gyulai’s historical performance. During the historical engagement, the allies expected Klenau’s corps to reinforce Gyulai, but the muddy roads discouraged Klenau from hurrying to the battle—an act that doomed Gyulai’s corps to destruction. Sources for the Battle of Dresden are numerous and well-researched. For this reason the OOB and battlefield map are quite accurate. This particular order of battle was borrowed directly from the larger, official Age of Eagles Dresden scenario presented in the main rule book. I took the liberty of making some minor modifications, most notably by reducing the number of artillery stands. For more sources, see Peter Hofschroer, Leipzig 1813 (1993), pp. 44-51.
French Order of Battle

MURAT
French Right Wing

LATOUR-MARBOURG
I Cavalry Corps ldr

Chastel
3rd Lt. Cav. Div. ldr
Vallin R 8/6/4 LC chasseurs
van Merlin R 8/6/4 LC chasseurs

Bordesoule
1st Hvy. Cav. Div. ldr
Berkheim E 10/7/5 HC cuirassiers
Bessieres E 8/5/3 HC cuirassiers
von Lessing E 8/5/3 HC cuirassiers (Saxon)

Doumerc
3rd Hvy. Cav. Div. ldr
d'Audenarde R 8/5/3 HC cuirassiers
Reiset R 10/8/5 HC dragoons

Light Horse Artillery Reserve #1-3

Victor
II Corps ldr

Hammerstein R 4/3/2 LC hussars (Westphalian)
Light Horse Artillery #4

Dubreton
4th Division ldr
Ferriere R 12/9/6 line
Brun R 12/9/6 line
Light Foot Artillery #5

Defour
5th Division ldr
d'Estko R 12/9/6 line
Light Foot Artillery #6

Vial
6th Division ldr
(from 23rd Division)
Valory R 12/9/6 line
Bronikowski R 12/9/6 line
Light Foot Artillery #7
O'Meara R 12/9/6 line

Austrian Order of Battle

GYULAI
III Armeekorps

Weissenwolf
2nd Division ldr
Czollich R 16/12/8 line
Grimmer R 9/7/5 line
Herzogenberg R 10/8/5 line
Light Foot Artillery #1 & 2

Liechtenstein
4th Division ldr
Seethal R 10/8/5 line
Mecserey R 13/10/7 line
Mulheim R 12/9/6 line
Light Foot Artillery #3 & 4

Mesko
3rd Light Div. ldr
Paumarten R 10/8/5 light
Paumarteen R 4/3/2 LC hussars
Szecsen R 5/4/3 line
Szecsen R 4/3/2 LC hussars
Light Foot Artillery #5