

# 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.



Joachim Murat

**French Orders:** Pin Gyulai's corps along the river bank and destroy the enemy in detail.



Ignaz Gyulai

**Austrian Orders:** Hold your ground as best you can, and establish contact with our main army via the bridges.

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**Victory points:** Refer to the *Age of Eagles* 'Casualty Points Chart' to determine victory points. Five points for uncontested control of the Plauen or Dölzschchen 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 Hofschröer, *Leipzig 1813* (1993), pp. 44-51.

# French Order of Battle

## MURAT French Right Wing

### MURAT

army ldr

#### LATOIR-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

##### Bordesoulle 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

Valory R 12/9/6 line  
Bronikowski R 12/9/6 line  
Light Foot Artillery #7

(from 23rd Division)

O'Meara R 12/9/6 line

# Austrian Order of Battle

## GYULAI III Armeekorps

### GYULAI

III Corps ldr

##### 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

Paumartten R 10/8/5 light  
Paumartten R 4/3/2 LC hussars  
Szecsen R 5/4/3 line  
Szecsen R 4/3/2 LC hussars  
Light Foot Artillery #5

# MAP & DEPLOYMENT

