

AN HISTORICAL SIMULATION GAME OF FIVE BATTLES IN ITALY, APRIL 1796

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BONAPARTE *Overruns*

PIEDMONTTM

WAR OF THE FIRST COALITION: PART I

Italian Campaigns I: Dawn of an Era

MONTENOTTE • DEGO • CEVA

SAN MICHELE • MONDOVI

12–21 April 1796

**Scenario Information,
Historical & Design Notes**



Study Folder

Vers. 1.62

OPERATIONAL STUDIES GROUP

Bonaparte Overruns Piedmont

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GAME COMPONENTS:

2 Map Sheets 22" x 34" and 1 Map Sheet 22" x 17"

1 Counter Sheet: 280 die-cut playing pieces

2 Booklets: System Rules, Study Folder

16 Player Aid Cards: TRC x6, Initial Set-up x3

(French, Austrian, Piedmont), Casualty x2, Combat Results, Reorganization, Weather, Fog of War x2

- Adding the Cards Folder, 11" x 17"
- Combat Tables Folder, 11" x 17"
- Orders Slip Sheet/Sequence of Play
- Victory Worksheet
- Cards Removed from Deck/Scenario Parameters
- Game Box

NOT INCLUDED: Optional deck of 100 cards (the "Universal Deck") is *not* included. The U.D. is included in *Napoleon's Wheel*. If you do not have a copy of *Napoleon's Wheel*, the Universal Decks can be ordered at Napoleongames.com.

Contact for missing parts: info@Napoleongames.com

25.0 SCENARIOS

Nice, 26 March 1796: Bonaparte arrived from Paris with an order from the government purser, addressed to one J.B. Sauvaigue, "to provide the new commander in chief with the fourth floor of your building so as to accommodate temporarily general Bonaparte who is to take command of the Army of Italy." Two weeks later the army's 35,168 front-line soldiers began crossing the Appenines, to collide head-on with a wing of Beaulieu's 26,697-man Austrian army. Beaulieu with the other wing

escaped from harm's way and sprinted for Acqui. The Piedmontese Army became Bonaparte's next target.

25.1 The Scenario Information

Bonaparte Overruns Piedmont includes five Battle Games and one Campaign Game. Players select a game to play, and then refer to the Initial Set-up Cards (25.21) and the appropriate section, listed below, to find the scenario information for each game:

27.0 MONTENOTTE, 11-12 April 1796

28.0 DEGO, 15 April 1796

29.0 SAN MICHELE, 19 April 1796

30.0 MONDOVI, 21 April 1796

31.0 BONUS BATTLE, CEVA, 16 April 1796

32.0 CAMPAIGN GAME, 12-21 April 1796

25.11 Turn Record Card (TRC): For each battle one or more TRCs are provided. The Game-Turn marker is placed on the turn designated as the Game Start.

25.12 One-Day Scenarios: Begin by playing any of the Battle Games (Day of Battle, DoB): 12 April, 15 April, 16 April, 19 April, or 21 April.

25.13 French Player Nationalities: The French Player controls units of France.

25.14 Coalition Player Nationalities: The Coalition Player controls units of Austria, Piedmont; and one unit of Naples (Cuto), which awaited orders in Nizza Monferrato. The "chasseurs francs et Niçards" a Piedmontese vedette, came from the occupied province of Nice.

25.15 Vedettes: Vedettes can be used freely with any friendly parent unit, regardless of i.d. Austrian infantry brigades I/Wetzel and II/Lipthay remain on the map on their flipped sides (16.13) when their single vedette is deployed.

25.16 Masséna's Advanced Guard Corps: French leader Masséna is officer-commander of the AG. His subordinate, La Harpe, is the officer of part of the AG (the 2AG Div). Masséna may command all units of 1AG or 2AG. (There is no separate officer for the 1AG—the inefficient Meynier). The Demoralization of the entire AG is tracked for both divisions in one combined total.

25.17 Coalition Armies and Commanders

Piedmontese units—labeled "P"—form a separate army. Colli (Piedmont) and Beaulieu (Austria) are the Coalition Commanders, and may only place officers or units of their own army in command, or give a March Order.

• **Non-Cooperation:** Units of the Piedmontese and Austrian armies cannot stack together or combine in an attack. If units from both armies are adjacent to a single French stack, only one of them can be subject to 10.31. The other stacks remain "in contact."

• **General Retreat (26.3) declaration** may apply to either the Piedmontese or the Austrian army, or both, at the Coalition player's option. The Coalition Player may declare General Retreat once per army per day.

- The two Coalition armies have entirely separate supply sources, labeled (P) and (A) respectively; French sources (F). Piedmontese units may not trace to (A) supply sources, and vice-versa.
- The Austrian unit Provera may be considered part of either Coalition army for supply purposes.

25.2 Setting Up the Scenarios

All units in play set-up in supply as Hidden Forces (8.2). All reinforcements (25.5) are in supply upon entry. Units may start in Road March at the owning player's option.

25.21 Initial Set-up: The First Player (26.6) sets up first. The units to set-up are listed on the Initial Set-up Cards. The Initial Set-up specifies the location for each unit. Refer to the appropriate column for your battle. The units to set-up at reduced strength are listed with an ®. They are treated as having been eliminated and already reorganized. "Composition" and "Notes" are for historical interest.

25.22 Hex Numbers: The hex numbers on the Initial Set-up cards show where units are located at the start of the scenario. Place all combat units and leaders on the map in play in the hexes specified. If there is no hex number listed, the unit is not placed in the PEU box, but is out of play; or, may be ALT (25.51). Setup hexes listed for maps other than the map in play only apply if playing the Campaign game (32.11). The second player may *adjust* the set-up of any one friendly unit by one hex prior to the first player turn (not in an EZOC). The set-up may include overstacked hexes. Make sure to observe stacking limits on your first move.

25.23 Reinforcements (19.1, 25.5): Reinforcement arrival is listed on the Turn Record Card (as modified by the play of Arrival Cards, 24.7). If the formation designation follows an officer's name, all units of that formation arrive on the same turn (25.53).

25.24 Pontoon Trains: Availability of pontoon trains is specified in the scenario information. Available Pontoon Trains must be set-up within [7] hexes of any friendly Commander unless otherwise specified. (The French had no pontoon train but may capture the Austrian pontoon.)

25.25 Baggage Trains: All Baggage Trains set-up within [7] hexes of any unit in their respective formation or enter as reinforcements (25.26), unless otherwise specified. Each formation has its own dedicated baggage train. EXCEPTION: Formations with fewer than 4 units in play.

25.26 Train Reinforcements:

- If a train is mentioned in the reinforcement schedule it enters as specified.
- If an entire formation is listed as a reinforcement, the baggage and pontoon trains arrive *after* all combat units.
- If a formation arrives over several turns, the trains arrive at owner's choice of time.

- If part of the formation sets-up on map and part arrives later as a reinforcement, trains set up or arrive with either group at owner's choice.

25.27 Leaders: Leaders set-up in the hex specified, or, at owning player's choice: Commanders may set-up with any Friendly force—Officers in any hex containing units of their Formation—in supply and not in an EZOC. Leaders ignore Mode Cards unless specifically mentioned. Leader cards may be played as "inapplicable" (24.35) prior to the named leader's arrival.

25.28 Vedettes: Vedettes may be deployed at the beginning of a scenario at the owning player's choice, anywhere within *three* hexes of their parent unit (not in an EZOC). The *second* player deploys all available vedettes first, then the first player deploys.

25.29 Out of Play Units: Units listed in the Setup on a map panel not in play are for the Campaign only (32.11).

25.3 Forces at a Glance

25.31 French Army of Italy

Div.	MONT	DEG	CEV	SAN	MOND
AG Masséna	★	★	★	★	★
I Augereau	★	★	★	★	★
II Sérurier	ALT	•	★	★	★
V Macquard	½ ALT	•	•	ALT	ALT
IC Stengel	•	•	★	★	★
IIC Kilmaine	•	•	★	★	★

25.32 Austrian Army of Lombardy

	MONT	DEG	CEV	SAN	MOND
I Sebottendorf	ALT	ALT	ALT	•	•
II Argenteau	★	★	½ ALT	½ ALT	½ ALT
P Colli	↙	★	★	★	★

KEY: ★ = most or all of the formation is in play.

↙ = part of formation in play. • = Not in play, but may be ALT.

25.33 French Divisions: The French Army contained only one corps-sized formation, the AG, otherwise fielding division-sized formations. (Use 3.23 *not* 3.22).

25.34 Coalition Formations: The I and II Austrian Columns are called "Corps" formations for game purposes. Piedmontese units comprise a separate formation (25.17).

25.35 Utility Markers: Utility Markers are Road Blocks (25.9), Weather, Late Start, Reinforcements Delayed, Square, Out of Supply, Reorganizing, Charge, Game-Turn, Control, Burnt Bridge, Repaired Bridge, Improved Position, Construction, Road March, Demoralized, Out of Command, In Command, Check, and Repulse. The use of these markers is explained below or in the Series Rules Folder.

• **Casualty Level:** These markers ("AG," "P") are placed on the Demoralization Track to record Casualty Levels (21.1). Casualty Level Markers for all other formations

may be found in recent games in the TLNB series, or use the formation's first eliminated unit as the marker.

- **Late Start:** Use this marker on all unawakened Commanders (Card No. 2, Late Start). The reverse side denotes Commanders and officers who are unable to provide command while Reorganizing.
- **Reinforcements Delayed:** applies to forces that are subject to Fog of War Card No. 24, Delay—March Confusion: 1, 2, or 3 turns delay.
- **Square:** Place the square marker on any infantry unit that was successfully charged to denote increased movement costs.
- **Suppressed:** (see *Bombardment Table*)
- **Command Markers:** During the Command Segment (B.4) place *In Command* markers on officers and units placed in command by commanders. Then place *In Command* or *Out of Command* markers on officers as they check initiative. As you go along, place *Check* markers on units beyond command range. (These will check initiative shortly; see 25.83). When checked and initiative is gained, place a **red** *Out of Command* marker to indicate the unit may move up to its MA—but not advance after combat.

25.4 Scenario Information Detail

The following information is provided in 27.0—33.0.

25.41 Duration: The game ends with the completion of the last turn specified under “Duration,” or may end immediately when all the formations of one side are demoralized or have exited. The Level of Victory still has to be determined (26.2).

25.42 Mode Cards at Start: The number of Mode Cards to draw on the first turn only.

25.43 Remove Cards from Deck: Before play begins remove specified number of cards from each Player's card deck (24.2). See separate list per Battle. *Scenario Parameters* is a summary of all the info you need to play, for all the battles, in one place.

25.44 Bonus Cards: On the second turn of each battle, each player draws a number of Bonus Cards specified for that battle. If playing the Campaign, at the end of each battle, each player draws a number of Bonus cards determined by victory level (26.5).

25.45 Alternate Reinforcements (ALT): Several Austrian units of II Corps, which had exited the map after Montenotte, are ALT Reinforcements on April 15th and 16th (25.51).

25.46 Special Rules: Rules that apply to this battle; at start conditions and map area in play. BOP-Specific Rules (25.7) apply to all battles.

25.47 Victory Conditions: Victory Points (26.1) are awarded for control of places on the map. Certain VP locations that **do not** count in a battle may be listed.

25.5 Reinforcements

Reinforcement units (19.1) are placed on the Turn Record Cards, and enter at the mapedge hex specified on the TRC. All units and leaders are listed separately (25.53).

25.51 Alternate Reinforcements (ALT): *ALT Reinforcements are nearby formations and units that were close enough to have appeared.* ALT Reinforcements are listed in the Scenario Information by group number. One numbered group of friendly ALT Reinforcements arrives for each Alternate Reinforcements Card (No. 29) played. ALT groups must arrive in order of priority starting with #1. Each time an ALT group enters, the enabling card is **removed from play** after being scored (26.16). ALT reinforcements enter at a reinforcement entry hex of the same army.

If not using the cards—roll **two** d6 during the Command Movement Segment of every Player Turn: on a result of 2 or 3, you may enter the next group of Alternate Reinforcements listed; if you roll a 4–12, there is no result. If you roll a 2 or 3, your opponent can roll 2d6 to delay by one turn the alternate reinforcements; the delay is successful if he also rolls a 2 or 3.

25.52 Hidden Reinforcements: All Reinforcements enter the map as Hidden Forces. Vedettes may enter instead of their parent unit.

25.53 Deploying Off-Map Reinforcements: For multi-hex forces, prior to entry, all additional stacks after the first are deployed off-map in a column (*see Glossary*), beginning with the leader at the front of the column, and ending with the baggage (25.26). Reinforcements can enter in Road March at the owning player's option.

25.6 March Orders

One March Order *per player* may be issued prior to the start of any scenario, to any friendly force in play on the map, **if** a Commander of the appropriate army is on-map at the start of the scenario (20.1).

25.61 Pre-Programmed March Orders: There are no Pre-Programmed March Orders in *Bonaparte Overruns Piedmont*.

25.7 Piedmont-Specific Rules

The following Special Rules apply to all battles.

25.71 Night Combat at Twilight: Darkness creates certain exceptions to the rules of Movement and Combat. All turns marked with the diagonal shading on the TRC use the **Day** Sequence of Play with the following modifications:

- There is **No Command Movement Segment:** All Movement during the shaded turns is by *Initiative*. EXCEPTIONS: Units with a current March Order in effect (20.4); Commanders can move freely (individually).

- There is **NO LOS** during shaded turns. You *must* define attacks before revealing enemy units.
- All “Ar*” and “Dr*” results become “**Shock.**”
- Arty. and HArt. may *not bombard* or contribute their strength to an adjacent attack; they may *defend* against enemy attacks as they would during daylight hours.
- Cards are not drawn or played during shaded turns. Movement Allowance is 2/3 MPs (inf/cav).

25.72 Recovery Turns: Determine *Weather* on the first turn of each day. Check again at 9AM and every 3 turns thereafter. Add any Modifiers to the WX Die Roll.

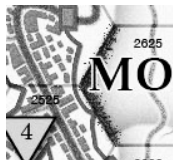
- Fog reduces MA of all units by 1.
- All listed weather conditions apply each turn until the next WX check. Weather effects do not apply at Night.

25.73 Baggage Train Movement: All Formations must recover any units awaiting reorganization before their baggage trains move farther away from the current friendly supply source. Otherwise, if the Formation’s Trunk Line (17.43) is increased, roll for each unit of the Formation still on the Reorganization Display: on a die roll of 5 or 6 move the unit to the PEU. All units that are out of supply (or lack a baggage train) upon reorganization (22.2) must also roll as above.

25.74 Ford Hexsides: Fords are treated as stream hexsides and share all the effects of stream terrain EXCEPTION: the MP cost to cross a ford is +2; ZOCs do not extend across Fords. Prior to the play of French Card No. 31, only Coalition forces may freely use fords. Once Coalition units cross at a given ford within 3 hexes of any French unit, leader or vedette, then the French player may use the same ford (29.34, 30.34).

25.75 Bonaparte: Bonaparte’s capture will bring about the game’s end in a Coalition victory.

25.77 Walled Town of Mondovi: Both hexes of Mondovi (W-2524, 2525) are treated as a chateau. Unstacked artillery and train units may end their move in either hex; an exception to (15.21). Walled Towns may be entered by units of either side **only** via one of the four gates. Combat between adjacent enemy units on opposite sides of a non-gated, walled hexside, is not permitted. Treat hex C-0423 as a Chateau hex. Apply the effects of Dragons Teeth (25.78) to the Walled hexside in C-0523. EXCEPTION: Artillery in walled hexes may bombard across the wall, even at a range of one hex.



25.78 Dragons Teeth: (W-2625, W-5418) Impassible rocky steep escarpment: treat like Rivers with blocked LOS. No ZOCs cross them, no attacks or bombardments across. No command trace, no retreat through.

25.79 Stone bridge: The Stone Bridge (W-3733) may not be damaged (7.63).

25.8 Optional Rules

May be adopted by consensus of players.

25.81 Artillery as Wheeled Units: Treat all artillery like trains, moving at cavalry costs. Artillery may not enter Slope hexes except by Road or Trail. Artillery may not cross Rivers (even if frozen), or streams, except via bridge, trestle, or Pontoon bridge. (Use with 25.82 below.)

25.82 Artillery on Sledges: All three Armies had mountain batteries of guns mounted on sledges: the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd batteries of all armies. They move as infantry and are not limited to using roads and trails to enter Slope hexes.

25.83 Out of Command: Use a gray Out of Command marker to mark a unit that is Out of Command due to failed initiative, because it is either:



- 1) *within* Command Range of its Officer who fails initiative roll (2.1, B-4);
- 2) *beyond* his Command Range and fails its own initiative roll (2.1, C-2).

Such a unit remains Out of Command and cannot advance after Combat or move.



Use a red marker to mark a unit that is beyond Range and *passes* its initiative roll. Such a unit remains Out of Command and cannot advance after combat but may move its full MA.

HOUSE RULE:



25.84 Officer Initiative Checks: If an officer is located 2 or 3 hexes from an enemy unit when he fails his Initiative die roll, the leader, plus all of his units in-Command Range may move 1 (and only 1) hex. They are Out of Command and cannot advance after combat.

25.85 Road March: Two units of 3 SPs or less may be adjacent to each other when in Road March (Exception to 7.53).

25.9 Optional Rule: Roadblocks

May be adopted by consensus of players. *The Austrians broke down their regiments into very small packets, (e.g., Gyulai Freikorps and Stain I.R.) at the start of the campaign, to act as scouts and speedbumps.*

25.91 General Rule: A roadblock is a packet of infantry (several companies or a battalion) with tools. It cannot move, and has a combat strength of (1) for defense only. It may never attack and simply remains in contact when adjacent to the enemy during the friendly combat phase. A roadblock is blocked to French and Coalition alike, including movement, retreats and supply lines (but not Command Radius). Enemy units may *not* enter a hex containing a Road Block counter. A roadblocked bridge is impassable for enemy movement until the roadblock

is cleared. Roadblocks are always immobile and “unable to retreat fully/PEU.”

25.92 Roadblock Construction: Each army can construct up to 2 Roadblocks at start and 2 each Night PM turn, at least 3 hexes from the nearest enemy unit, and within 2 hexes of a friendly infantry unit (in both cases tracing only through terrain passable to infantry). Roadblocks may only be placed in a road or trail hex at a defile—either end of a bridge, in a town, slope hex, or woods, and must be pointed toward the defile hexside. Construction is automatic—simply place the Roadblock Marker with the red arrow pointed toward the blocked defile, and conceal it with a French or Coalition flag marker on top. You may build up to two roadblocks in a hex, each pointing to a different defile hexside.

25.93 Reconnaissance against Roadblocks: Roadblocks are placed face down until revealed by recon (8.3) or Repulse (9.12). The roadblock is treated as “no cav” on the Reconnaissance Table. A repulse is resolved as a regular combat, with no column shift (9.22).

25.94 Roadblock ZOCs: A *Hidden* Roadblock marker has a ZOC into all adjacent hexes. The 5 *non*-defile hexsides are revealed as non-controlled only when the roadblock marker is revealed, leaving one actual hex of ZOC. Friendly units may stack with the Roadblock—their ZOCs are unimpaired.

25.95 Clearing Roadblocks: To clear a roadblock, an infantry unit must attack it through the defile hexside. If attacking exclusively through a defile hexside it is resolved on the Shock Combat Table. A retreat or 1R result for the roadblock means it is cleared. A cavalry or artillery unit without infantry cannot attack (or bombard) through the defile hexside. The roadblock hex may be attacked from non-defile hexsides. If no infantry units attack through the defile hexside, that roadblock is not removed. The initiative of roadblocks (needed to resolve shock combat) is [3]; an attack by a 3 or better will cause it to be cleared. If attackers from more than one hex join in, the regular CRT is used; treat “Ex” results as “no effect.” Remain in contact.

25.96 Defending a Roadblock: There are no additional terrain effects on combat for units stacked with a roadblock. The defense strength of the roadblock is added to the total combat strength defending the hex, unless no infantry attack through the Roadblock hexside. Cavalry Charges are not permitted against a Roadblock hexside.

26.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

Victory is awarded to the player or team with the most Victory Points at the end of the game. In the Campaign Game, the level of Victory is according to the ratio of each side’s Victory Point total (26.23).

26.1 Victory Point Awards

Victory Points (VPs) are awarded for the conditions listed (26.11). Calculate VP awards at the end of battle.

26.11 Determine VP Totals: VPs are awarded for...

- a) Enemy Combat SPs Eliminated (26.12)
- b) Enemy Formations Demoralized (26.13).
- c) Captured Enemy Baggage Trains (26.14).
- d) Controlled Hexes (26.15)
- e) Total VPs of cards you have played (26.16)
- f) Leaders in a town through the Night (26.17)
- g) Captured Commanders (26.18)
- h) Units that have exited the map (26.3)

26.12 Total Combat SPs Eliminated

At the end of the battle, total the losses in SPs by both sides, including the total SPs in the PEU, Unrecovered and Recovered boxes. Don't count SPs in the Full Strength Holding Box. Subtract the smaller from the larger total. The side losing the least SPs receives VPs as follows:

Difference	VP Award	Difference	VPs
0-4	0 VPs	20-24	4 VPs
5-9	1 VP	25-29	5 VPs
10-14	2 VPs	30-34	6 VPs
15-19	3 VPs	35-39	7 VPs, etc.

When calculating Total Combat Strength count the unit's Full Strength. EXCEPTION: For units *starting* the scenario at Reduced Strength, use reduced strength.

26.13 Enemy Formations Demoralized: Each Player receives [4] VPs for each enemy Formation demoralized at the end of play. EXCEPTION: only [2] VP are awarded for demoralization when the demoralization level of the formation is 4 or less.

26.14 Captured Baggage Trains: The Player receives [2] VPs for each Enemy Baggage Train captured (18.14).

26.15 Control: The Player receives [4] VPs for each *Enemy* Supply Source he controls. Each Player also receives the number of Victory Points printed on the map for each VP Hex he controls. EXCEPTIONS:

- The Scenario Victory Conditions may specify certain VP hexes that do *not* apply in that scenario.

To be considered in control of a hex, a friendly *Combat Unit in Supply* must physically occupy the hex, or be the last Combat Unit to have occupied or moved through it. An occupying unit that is Out of Supply at the moment it enters or moves through a hex does not control that hex. To indicate the control of a hex, place a control marker of the proper side in the hex.

26.16 Cards: Add or subtract the VP Value of *each card* you have played during the game, if that card's instruction was actually used, as specified on the card.

26.17 Leader in a town throughout the Night: Each player receives ONE-HALF VP for every friendly

Leader in a town or a Chateau who will remain there until 7 AM. (Round fractions down.)

26.18 Capture of Commanders: A player receives a number of VPs for each captured Commander equal to that Commander's Command Rating (also see 25.76).

26.2 Levels of Victory

At the end of the battle the total of Victory Points achieved by the two players is compared as a ratio (French: Coalition), which determines the level of victory—Marginal, Tactical, or Strategic. Divide the French by the Coalition VP total.

26.21 Find VP Ratio:

1 to 2 or less	Coalition Strategic
1 to 1.5 / 1 to 1.99	Coalition Tactical
1 to 1 / 1 to 1.49	Coalition Marginal
1.01 to 1 / 1.5 to 1	French Marginal
1.51 to 1 / 2 to 1	French Tactical
More than 2 to 1	French Strategic

26.22 When Total of VPs is Zero: Convert scores of “0” to “1” in order to calculate VP ratio.

26.23 Levels of Victory in the Campaign Game:

In the Campaign Game at the end of each battle, the winner, Level of Victory and total VPs for each side must be recorded (26.5).

26.3 Exiting the Map

Either Player may choose to exit his units by playing the “General Retreat” card once per game.

If not using the cards, the Phasing Player may declare one General Retreat per Army (20.5).

Exit hexes may not always be marked on the maps. Individual units in a General Retreat move to the closest Supply Source of the appropriate army (20.51). Special Rules may specify additional exit conditions. Friendly units may exit where an enemy unit previously exited. The exiting unit pays the Movement cost of the hex it is leaving once again. Exited leaders may *not* reorganize units. Units that exit the map cannot be returned to play and are *not* considered eliminated for Victory Point purposes. Units forced to *retreat* off the map are eliminated (12.34).

26.31 VP Award: If he makes a “General Retreat” the Exiting Player receives [4 VP] for exiting each friendly baggage train, and [1 VP] for every five combat units exited. EXCEPTION: The *total number of VPs* from exiting units may not exceed *the total number of enemy combat units* PEU and UAR. EXAMPLE: The Coalition player exits 25 units. The French lost 5 units, so all five VPs are counted.

26.32 Exit by March Order: A force may be assigned a March Order to exit the map.

26.33 No Award: Even if you do *not* declare “General Retreat,” you may choose at any time to exit individual units to prevent their destruction, but *unless* they exit at their own Supply Source, you receive no VPs, and the exited units cannot be returned to play.

26.4 Zero Loss Award

The Player receives [2] VPs if the total of eliminated SPs in the Friendly PEU + Unrecovered + Recovered boxes at the end of the game is zero.

26.5 Bonus Cards in the Campaign Game

The Campaign includes all five battles (DoB and AtB) and four Lull Days (32.71), played day by day in date order. Score the Level of Victory at the end of each Day of Battle (only). Each victory will allow the winning player to draw “Bonus Cards” from his card deck at the next day of battle.

Strategic Victory: 3 Bonus Cards per battle

Tactical Victory: 2 Bonus Cards per battle

Marginal Victory: 1 Bonus Card per battle

Each player receives a minimum of 2 Bonus Cards.

EXAMPLE: The French Player wins a Marginal Victory at Montenotte. He would draw one “Bonus Card” (plus the regular cards) on turn two of DeGo. The Coalition Player would draw the minimum of 2 Bonus Cards each day.

26.6 First Player

The first player sets-up first. The French Player is the First Player. (EXCEPTION: 28.17, 29.17)

27.0 THE BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE

Attack in the West, 12 April 1796

27.1 Introduction

On 10 April, the left wing of the Austrian army under Beaulieu moved southward against Cervoni's advanced brigade, at Voltri on the Ligurian coast. This wing was isolated by mountains from the right wing under Argenteau, moving through Montenotte in parallel to his chief.

At dawn on 12 April, French cannon began firing from Monte Negino on the advancing Austrians. Argenteau deployed Stain (I.R. No. 50) and Pellegrini (No. 49) to hold the center, and assigned two more battalions to defend the left flank on Monte Pra. Then he took the Alvinczi I.R. (No. 19) to rescue the 3rd Terzi (No. 16) on his right.

La Harpe fell on the Austrians stoutly defending Monte Pra, while Masséna's assault made such rapid progress that Argenteau ordered a retreat, and the 3rd Terzi battalion was nearly destroyed. The Alvinczi battalion provided the rear guard, losing its color and many soldiers. Argenteau's men barely cleared Montenotte Inferiore before Masséna and La

Harpe arrived. By 9:30 A.M. the battle was over. The Austrians, who went into action with 9,300 men, lost 2,500 killed, wounded, and captured, and 12 guns; most of the Austrian casualties were prisoners caught up in the pursuit; the French lost 880 out of 10,000 available troops.

27.11 Duration: 12 Apr, 7 AM—13 Apr, 3 PM (25 turns).

27.12 Mode Cards at Start: French 2, Coalition 2

27.13 Bonus Cards, Turn 2: French 2, Coalition 2.

27.14 Pontoon Trains: none.

27.15 Improved Positions: E-5030, E-5131, E-4024, E-3009, E-3109, E-3409

27.16 Roadblocks: French 2, Coalition 5

27.17 First Player: The French Player is first player.

27.2 Alternate Reinforcements:

FRENCH

#1. Pelletier/II, Miollis/II, E-2534

#2. AUGEREAU, Beyrand, Banel, 2nd, Baggage, E-2534—Accelerated from 12 Apr., 9 PM.

COALITION

#1. Ocskay, Loudon, Pittoni-a, E-4701

#2. BEAULIEU, SEBOTTENDORF, Wetzel, Nicoletti, Rosselmini, Cuto (Variable arrival)

#3. Liphay, Spork, Schübirz, Mészáros Uh., (Var.)

#4. Vukassovich-a & -b, (Variable arrival)

Variable arrival hex is dependent upon the turn:

7-10AM – E-6133; 11AM-3PM – E-6122 or 6118;

4PM and on – E-6106 or 6103; *What if* options (27.35).

27.3 Special Rules

27.31 Damaged Bridges at Start: None.

27.32 March Orders at Start: Each Player has one (20.1).

27.33 Map Area in Play: Set up all units in accordance with the “MONT DoB” column of the Initial Set-up. This scenario uses the Montenotte (East) Map.

27.34 French Supply Problems: *The French troops advanced through the mountains without baggage trains, foraging for subsistence. After the fights at both Montenotte and Dego, the half-starved troops could not be restrained. This resulted in a temporary setback whenever the Austrians suddenly appeared.* The French AG and I Division must trace supply to either French Supply Source until their Baggage Trains arrive (12 Apr).

27.35 “What if” Battle of Savona: *Beaulieu’s column reached Voltri and easily repulsed Cervoni’s brigade on April 11th. If Beaulieu had continued down the coast to Savona (repulsing Stengel’s 6,400 cavalry) he could have arrived on the south mapedge.* **Variable Arrival** hex varies by turn: 7-8AM – E-4433; 9-10AM – E-3833; 11AM-3PM – E-6133; 4PM and on – E-6122.

27.36 Montenotte (E-4719 and E-4524): Black “buildings” have no effect on play: they are not “Towns.”

27.4 Victory Conditions

VPs are earned as per 26.1.

27.41 Control: VP Hexes that Do NOT count: none

27.5 Approach to Battle

27.51 Duration: 11 Apr., 7 AM—13 Apr., 3 PM (41 turns).

27.52 Mode Cards at Start: French 2, Coalition 1.

27.53 Alternate Reinforcements:

FRENCH

No French ALT cards may be played on 11 April.

COALITION

#1. Ocskay, Loudon, Pittoni-a, E-4701

#2. BEAULIEU, SEBOTTENDORF, Wetzel, Nicoletti, Rosselmini, Cuto, E-6133

#3. Schübirz, Mészáros Uh., Spork, E-6133

#4. Vukassovich-a & -b, Letzeny, Liphay, Mitrovsky, E-6133

27.54 Map Area in Play: Set up all units in accordance with the “MONT AtB” column of the Initial Set-up. This scenario uses the Montenotte (East) Map only.

27.55 All other Scenario info: (Same as 27.12—27.4)

28.0 THE BATTLE OF DEGO

Coalition Forces are Divided, 15 April 1796

28.1 Introduction

Augereau was sent west against the Piedmontese to converge with Sérurier’s advance from Ormea. Masséna and La Harpe were ordered north, up the Bormida valley, to attack Dego where the Coalition garrison of 4,000 men held strong posts on the east bank of the Bormida River. Masséna fixed the garrison with a frontal attack while extending his right along the high ground to the east. La Harpe came up the west bank and crossed below Dego. The Austrians and Piedmontese were eventually forced-out, losing 350 casualties and at least 1,500 prisoners. The victorious French then scattered to take shelter from the rain.

At daybreak of 15 April, Vukassovich’s 3,500 fresh Austrians attacked the disorganized French and completely routed them. At 4 PM the French counterattacked, thrown back three times. Menard worked his way around the Austrian left, and a fourth assault broke into the town.

28.11 Duration: 15 Apr., 7AM—7-8 PM inclusive (13 turns).

28.12 Mode Cards at Start: French 3, Coalition 1

28.13 Bonus Cards, Turn 2: French 2, Coalition 3.

28.14 Pontoon Trains: none

28.15 Improved Positions: E-3009, E-3109, E-3409

28.16 Roadblocks: French 2, Coalition 2

28.17 First Player: The Coalition Player is first player.

28.2 Alternate Reinforcements:

FRENCH

None

COALITION

- #1. Spork, Ocskay, Loudon, 4th, Attems, 7th, E-4701
- #2. BEAULIEU, SEBOTTENDORF, Wetzels, Nicoletti, 5th, Cuto, E-6103
- #3. Schübirz, Mézáros, 1st, E-6103
- #4. I.R. 8, Reserve, Pittoni-a, E-4701

28.3 Special Rules**28.31 Damaged Bridges at Start:** none**28.32 March Orders at Start:** Each Player has one (20.1)**28.33 Map Area in Play:** Set up all units in accordance with the “DEG” column of the Initial Set-up. This scenario uses the Montenotte (East) map. Ignore units on the West and Center maps (campaign only).**28.34 Fog of War Cards in Effect:** Coalition cards No. 20 and 30 are in effect at start (see FoW cards 24.9).**28.4 Victory Conditions**

VPs are earned as per 26.1.

28.41 Control: VP hexes that do NOT count: none**29.0 THE BATTLE OF SAN MICHELE***The Corsaglia Line, 19 April 1796***29.1 Introduction**

On 16 April Augereau attacked the naturally strong position south of the Pedaggera Pass (31.0). After stopping this assault, Colli's flanks were still threatened by French columns maneuvering to bypass him. He exploited the lull to fall back to the River Corsaglia—uncovering the fortress of Ceva.

The Corsaglia River was in full spate and impassable. The Piedmontese artillery opened up with a well-directed fire. Augereau's attack was called off. Sérurier's two columns were also halted on the right bank, exposed to the guns. Sérurier contemplated aborting the operation when his men saw some enemy soldiers crossing the river on a footbridge. The French immediately crossed behind them, rushing into San Michele and overrunning a battery. Dichat's grenadiers were holding on inside the village but elsewhere the men began to melt away. Surrounded on all sides, facing desperate house-to-house combat at odds of 1:6, Dichat's 600 men surrendered by 1:30 P.M.

The hungry French stopped to loot the village and in the confusion, Captain Schreiber's 73 Swiss Grenadiers boldly jumped into the fray. They seized a gun and turned it against its owners, then proceeded to reach Dichat's grenadiers and rearm them with their muskets stacked nearby. Colli showed up and mounted a counterattack with the grenadiers and a battalion of the Savoy Regiment. The sight of the grenadiers' bayonets was too much for Sérurier's division, which stampeded for the bridge. Apart from the small bridgehead on the

western bank, Sérurier's division was repulsed altogether. The French lost 600 or 700 dead and wounded, and 100 prisoners. The Piedmontese lost 150 dead and 200 wounded.

29.11 Duration: 19 Apr., 3 AM—7-8 PM (14 turns).**29.12 Mode Cards at Start:** French 2, Coalition 1**29.13 Bonus Cards, Turn 2:** French 2, Coalition 3**29.14 Pontoon Trains:** 1 with Leader Colli**29.15 Improved Positions:** none**29.16 Roadblocks:** French 0, Coalition 3**29.17 First Player:** The Coalition Player is 1st player.**29.2 Alternate Reinforcements**

FRENCH

- #1. MACQUARD/V (all), W-3434

COALITION

- #1. BEAULIEU, ARGENTEAU/II, Salisch, Letzenyi. Liphay-b, Mitrovsky, 2nd, W-3601
- #2. Kerpen, I.R. 8, Reserve, Pittoni-b, W-3601
- #3. Streng, W-0117 (Piedmontese)

29.3 Special Rules**29.31 Damaged Bridges at Start:** W-4127, W-5020.**29.32 March Orders at Start:** Each Player has one (20.1).**29.33 Map Area in Play:** This scenario uses the Mondovi (West) Map. Set-ups are specified on the “SAN DoB” column of the Initial Set-up. Ignore units on the East and Center maps (campaign only).**29.34 Fog of War Cards in Effect:** French card No. 31 and Coalition cards no. 20 and 30 are in effect at start (see FoW cards 24.9).**29.4 Victory Conditions**

The VPs are earned as per 26.1.

29.41 Control: VP Hexes that Do NOT count: W-2525**30.0 THE BATTLE OF MONDOVI***Piedmont's Last Fight, 21 April 1796***30.1 Introduction**

Bonaparte brought Masséna's division forward while, on the flank of the French advance, Beaulieu still hesitated to mount any effort to help his ally. On the night of 20 April, Colli withdrew some units from the Corsaglia position and began arranging for the army's supply base to be moved out of Mondovi. The next morning, Sérurier's advance struck the Piedmontese rearguard on the heights of Buon Gesù (W-3631) and drove it back on the town of Vicoforte. Sérurier led a sudden charge with Masséna's division following-up.

The timing of this attack caught Colli redeploying. A few of his units panicked and fled, leaving gaps in the line. Fiorella and Guieu's brigades, supported by Masséna, captured Vicoforte. The Piedmontese at La Bicocca held firm

until Dichat was killed, then joined the disorderly retreat. Bonaparte lost 600 killed and wounded out of 17,500. The Piedmontese lost 1800 men, 4 generals, 11 standards, and 8 guns out of 13,000 at Mondovi.

30.11 Duration: 21 Apr., 7 AM—6 PM (12 turns).

30.12 Mode Cards at Start: French 1, Coalition 2

30.13 Bonus Cards, Turn 2: French 2, Coalition 2

30.14 Pontoon Trains: 1 with Leader Colli

30.15 Improved Positions: W-2526, W-2827

30.16 Roadblocks: French 0, Coalition 2

30.17 First Player: The French Player is 1st player.

30.2 Alternate Reinforcements

FRENCH

#1. MACQUARD/V (all), W-3434

COALITION

#1. BEAULIEU, ARGENTEAU/II, Salisch, Letzenyi, Liphay-b, Mitrovsky, 2nd, W-3601

#2. II/Kerpen, I.R. 8, Reserve, Pittoni-b, W-3601

#3. P/Streng, W-0117

30.3 Special Rules

30.31 Damaged Bridge at Start: none

30.32 March Orders at Start: Each Player—one (20.1).

30.33 Map Area in Play: This scenario uses the Mondovi (West) Map.

30.34 Fords: (25.74). The French have found all fords including the one leading onto the map at 3434. Sérurier may exit the map at 3834 and re-enter after one full turn off-map at 3434, along with up to all 4 combat units of II Div. in this battle.

30.35 Refugees: All Coalition combat units *and Baggage* west of the Ellero-Tanaro River line (1634-4401) with an unblocked Supply Line (17.4) at the end of the scenario, will be counted as part of the total of exited units. All *Out of Supply* Coalition forces on the West map at the end of the scenario will be counted as PEU. EXCEPTION: Coalition units in Mondovi (either hex) are considered in Supply (not PEU).

30.4 Victory Conditions

The VPs are earned as per 26.1.

30.41 Control: VP hexes that do NOT count: W-3828.

31.0 THE BATTLE OF CEVA

The Pedaggera Pass, 16 April 1796

31.1 Introduction

On the 16th, Sérurier and Augereau drove Colli out of Montezemolo into the fortified camp of Ceva. Augereau attacked the naturally strong position of the Pedaggera. After stopping this assault, Colli's flanks were still under threat by French columns maneuvering to bypass him. As the French prepared

an assault on Ceva on the night of the 17th, the Piedmontese withdrew unmolested to a stronger position at the village of San Michele along the Corsaglia River near its confluence with the Tanaro. What might have been gained if they had stayed?

The citadel of Ceva was held by 500 men under Count Tornaforte, who refused to surrender. The impetuous General Rusca launched an unprepared assault on some forward redoubts, easily beaten back with the loss of 2 French guns. The next day, a French battery with 6 guns was taken out by the artillery of the fortress.

The furious Rusca intended to attack the citadel once more, but in reality the fortress was impregnable as long as the French lacked siege artillery. Bonaparte finally arrived and ordered Rusca to wait for the siege artillery before taking any further action.

31.11 Duration: 16 Apr., 7AM—7-8 PM inclusive (13 turns).

31.12 Mode Cards at Start: French 2, Coalition 1

31.13 Bonus Cards, Turn 2: French 2, Coalition 1.

31.14 Pontoon Trains: W-5921, deployed (Campaign)

31.15 Improved Positions: C-0608, C-0610, C-0712, C-0614, C-0616, C-0418, C-0419, C-0420, C-0421.

31.16 Roadblocks: French 2, Coalition 3

31.17 First Player: The French Player is first player.

31.2 Alternate Reinforcements:

FRENCH

None

COALITION

#1. ARGENTEAU, Kerpen, Salisch, Letzenyi, Mitrovsky, Liphay-b, 2nd, C-1401

#2. BEAULIEU, SEBOTTENDORF, Wetzels, Nicoletti, 5th, Cuto, C-1401

#3. Schübirtz, Mézáros, 1st, C-1401

#4. I.R. 8, Reserve, Pittoni-a, Pittoni-b, Spork, C-1401

31.3 Special Rules

31.31 Damaged Bridges at Start: none

31.32 March Orders at Start: Each Player has one (20.1)

31.33 Map Area in Play: Set up all units in accordance with the "CEV" column of the Initial Set-up. This scenario uses the Ceva (Center) map.

31.4 Victory Conditions

VPs are earned as per 26.1.

31.41 Control: VP hexes that do NOT count: none

32.0 CAMPAIGN GAME

The Collapse of Piedmont: 11 April—21 April 1796

32.1 Introduction

The Campaign Game consists of eleven days, starting with the Montenotte Approach to Battle (27.5) The results of fighting influences the number of bonus cards you get (26.5). Record VPs achieved at the end of each “day of battle” in spaces provided on the *Victory Worksheet*.

32.11 Duration: 11 Apr., 7 AM—21 Apr., 6 PM (171 turns). Alternatively, the Campaign may be started at any later date for which setups are given. Skip Lull days (32.71)

32.12 Mode Cards at Start: (27.12)

32.13 Bonus Cards at Start: (27.13)

32.14 Pontoon Trains: 1 with Piedmont Leader Colli

32.15 Improved Positions: (27.15, 28.15, 31.15)

32.16 Roadblocks: French 2, Coalition 5

32.17 First Player: The French Player is First Player.

32.2 Alternate Reinforcements

Use 27.2

32.3 Special Rules

Use appropriate Special Rules from Montenotte (27.31, 27.32, 27.34, 27.36).

32.31 Remove Cards from Deck: Use the listing for each battle as you progress through the campaign.

32.32 Map Area in Play: The Campaign Game uses all three maps, laid out end-to-end from west to east.

32.33 Improved Positions: Only set up the Improved Positions for one map at a time as each map is entered, and remove them as the campaign progresses to the next map. That way you can recycle the limited I.P. Markers included so that they will suffice for the entire campaign.

32.34 Casualty Tracks: Use the highest Demoralization level listed on Casualty Tracks for a given formation.

32.4 Campaign Victory Conditions

The total of VPs is tallied per player at the end of each battle (26.5). See the “Campaign Ratio” Section of the Victory Worksheet to determine the overall victory level.

32.41 Control: Tally at the end of each day of battle; i.e., April 13th, 16th, 19th and 21st. On Lull days (32.71), no VPs are scored.

32.42 Limit to Award: The VP Award for a given town can only be counted once by each player. If he controls a location on the 13th, the player receives no additional award for controlling the same location on the 16th, etc.

32.43 Sudden Death: If the Austrians achieve a Strategic Victory at Montenotte, this also brings about the end of the campaign. Sudden Death ONLY applies to Montenotte, not the other battles.

32.5 Initial Set-up

To start the Campaign, use the MONT AtB set-up.

32.51 Force Structure: For both players, force structure equals the initial set up for 11-Apr., plus Reinforcements (as shown on the 6 TRC cards), plus any ALT Reinf.

32.52 OPTIONAL Austrian Variable ALT Schedule: *Beaulieu’s premature offensive to protect Genoa left him wrong-footed when Bonaparte took the stage. What if there had been no premature Austrian attack, with Sebottendorf’s I Corps still at Acqui? Beaulieu would be concentrated and ready to march sooner.*

During the Start Phase of the Austrian Player Turn of 11-Apr., 7 AM, roll twice for each Austrian ALT Reinforcement Group: once for which day and again for the Game Turn on that day the group arrives.

FIRST DIE ROLL: DAY		2 ND DIE ROLL
ALT #1, #2	ALT #3, #4	Game-Turn
1–2 = 12 April	—	1–2 = 7 AM
3 = 13 April	1–2 = 13 April	3 = 9 AM
4 = 14 April	3–4 = 14 April	4 = 12 N
5 = 15 April	5 = 15 April	5 = 3 PM
6 = 16 April	6 = 16 April	6 = 6 PM

Reveal each result to the French Player. Place the ALT forces on the TRC for that turn—use the ALT forces listed on the **Initial Set up card** for the actual date of arrival. EXAMPLE: If ALT #1 arrives on the 16th, it will consist of ARGENTEAU, Salisch, Letzenyi (unless PEU), etc. If ALT #1 arrives on 12-Apr, it will consist of Pittoni-a, Loudon and Ocskay (who is then unable to arrive with ALT #4 on 15-Apr.)

32.53 Appearance: ALT Reinforcements (32.52) arrive on the north mapedge at an entry hex of the Coalition Player’s choice: either E-2601, E-3801, E-4701, or C-1401. Piedmontese ALT unit Streng arrives at W-0117.

32.54 Force Structure: Units with specified locations on the Initial Set up do not change their set-up location. Historical (printed) arrivals on the Turn Record Track do not change (32.51).

32.6 Turn Record Tracks

Use all TRCs in date order. Ignore “battle game only,” and “Historical interest only” reinforcements merely entering from one map to another.

32.7 Lull Days

After a full day of battle, an army was in need of food, medical care, ammunition and reorganization. Nobody could fight while engaged in Recovery and Reorganization. Outposts at these times stopped firing, while some units continued to maneuver. Officers were rebuilding their fighting capability, with troops missing or foraging.

32.71 Lull Days: Days between days of battle are Lull Days: 13-Apr (evening), 14, 17, 18, and 20-Apr. During a Lull Day, any Out of Supply combat units that move must move closer to their own baggage train or Friendly

Supply Source and may not voluntarily enter Enemy ZOCs until they are once again in Supply.

32.72 Reduced and Eliminated Units: Eliminated units at start will depend on the outcome of the fight in prior battles. Continue to use your surviving units from day to day. Units in the UAR and PEU can be reorganized (32.73, 32.74). Reinforcements may arrive during Lulls.

32.73 Reorganizing “Permanently” Eliminated Units: PEU may be reorganized during the Reorganization Segment on Lull Days. Every Recovery Turn (25.72) the Player may reorganize ONE friendly combat unit currently in the PEU box. (If there are none, you may select any unit in the UAR instead.) These units follow the Recovery process (22.12). PEU may *not* be reorganized:

- during a Day of Battle
- during an Approach to Battle
- if the unit has no dedicated baggage train on map.

32.74 Reorganizing UAR units: During Lull Days the player may automatically reorganize any 4 units per Recovery Turn. If the associated baggage train moves, is currently out of play, captured or exited, no reorganization may take place.

32.75 Reorganization of Captured Baggage Trains: The Phasing Player may automatically reorganize one lost baggage train per Recovery Turn. The recovered baggage train enters as a reinforcement at any Supply Source of the same army (not in an EZOC). VPs awarded for the original baggage are not lost.

32.76 Skip Lull Days: For a quicker campaign, skip evening of April 13th and the 14th and move directly to the battle scenario start for the 15th (28.0). For reinforcements that appear on the 14th, use the historical set-up positions for “15-Apr,” or (owning player’s choice) a hex between there and their entry hex on the quickest route; implement other scenario information provided in 28.2–28.3. All units in the UAR and all captured baggage trains are automatically reorganized prior to the start of the next DoB. (You may similarly skip the other Lull Days.)

32.8 Team Play

In a three-player game, one assumes the role of Bonaparte; Coalition Players represent Colli and Beaulieu. Add Massena in a 4-Player game. The Commanders control their historically-associated formations (25.17).

32.81 Communication Among Players: Players may *not* freely discuss their plans, tactics or strategy unless the Commanders they represent are within *four* hexes of each other.

32.82 Aides-de-Camp: Written notes may be passed between Coalition players. One message may be dispatched per player every friendly Command Phase.

32.83 Objective Hexes: Only place names, not hex numbers, may be specified as objective hexes.

32.84 Arrival Time: Written notes are dispatched during the Friendly Command Phase and are received during a later Friendly Command Phase. Arrival time:

- on the same map section—3 complete Turns
- from one map to the next—6 complete Turns
- to Off-Map formations—12 complete Turns

32.85 Victory: After the winning side is determined, each of the Players compares the total VPs that he obtained (26.11) or hexes his units were first to occupy for his side. He becomes C-in-C in the next contest, with choice of which side to play and teammate.

HISTORICAL NOTES

Kevin Zucker

DAWN OF AN ERA

The Campaign of 1796 marked the appearance of a new system of war, influenced by the revolutionary zeitgeist and shaped by French military theorists, that transformed the army's organization, logistics and tactics. General Bonaparte made use of these developments to bring about an upheaval in strategy, introducing a level of operational planning, to prove the primacy of maneuver as opposed to wars of position. For the first of many times, he employed the central position, shifting forces at the operational level to achieve tactical superiority. Bonaparte's success against Piedmont earned him wide respect; his growing fame and popularity opened doors into the circles of power.

The 1796-97 Campaign in Italy permanently altered the course of history. The revolutionary armies carried ideas as well as ammunition in their baggage, unleashing a wave of nationalist movements to shake the structures of the past, starting with the 1820 risings in the kingdoms of Sicily, Naples and Piedmont.

Bonaparte took full credit when the port of Toulon fell on December 19th, 1793. His name became known to key officials, and he gained promotion to the rank of brigadier general. In March, 1794, he took command of the artillery of the Army of Italy. Fourteen months later he was ordered to the Vendée, on the western coast of France, where a royalist insurrection threatened to create a second front against the revolution.

DAYS OF REVOLUTION IN PARIS

In May, 1795, Bonaparte appeared in Paris, surprising his superiors by declining the Vendée assignment which he considered a hazard to his career. He was enrolled among supernumerary officers by the Committee of Public Safety, put on half-pay and effectively retired, spending his days plotting wild schemes and hosting

parties at his apartment near the Place des Victoires in Paris. He indulged in the life of the capital, “frequenting theaters, libraries, salons, admiring the women, and making useful connections in the gaudy, immoral society of the time. One such connection was Paul François Barras,¹⁴ whose “immorality in both public and private life was notorious,” and whose influence on the Corsican would be profound.¹⁶

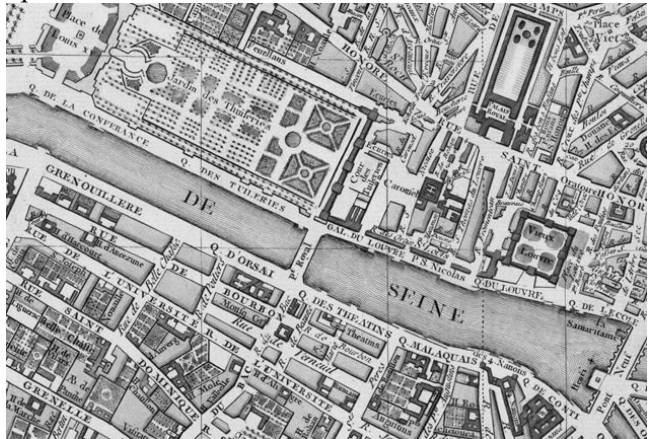
The general met Barras’ slightly-faded mistress, the widow Marie-Rose-Josephe de Beauharnais. After separating from General Alexandre de Beauharnais, the couple had been briefly reunited in prison during the Reign of Terror. The general was guillotined; his widow spared by the timely overthrow of Robespierre in July 1794.



Josephine returned to her son, Eugène, and daughter, Hortense, and spiraled to the summit of revolutionary society, presiding along with Juliette Recamier and Theresa Tallien—the latter sharing honors with Josephine as mistress to Barras. Josephine’s femininity and elegance enchanted Bonaparte. At the advice of Barras, she agreed to marry him.¹⁴

The legislators of the National Convention were working that summer on a new constitution, the purpose of which was “to keep power in the hands of those who had it, and to prevent both royalists and democrats upsetting the status quo.”¹⁴ In August they decreed the re-election of two-thirds of their number to the successor assembly. The influential sections of Paris rejected the obligatory re-election.

Disturbances mounted during September, 1795; the storm burst on October 4th. Throughout the city, the drums of the sectionnaires beat the *generale*, calling upon the citizens to assemble in arms. Barricades were



set up at the Pont Neuf. General Jacques François

Menou, the Army of the Interior’s commander, ordered the sectionnaires to disperse; they refused. Menou withdrew and the government, gripped by crisis, immediately sacked him. In the evening, General Bonaparte was in a box of the Feydeau Theatre, watching a play, when friends informed him of what was happening. He went to the Convention and took a seat in the spectators’ gallery. The Convention was extremely agitated:



the Republic was in danger. General Verdier was tasked with the defense of the National Palace, where the Convention was still in session. The Committee of Public Safety in desperation named Barras to replace Menou. But Barras was no general. At his recommendation no doubt, several representatives proposed Bonaparte as the man most capable of saving the Republic.¹⁴

The next day “shortly after four o’clock in the afternoon, two insurgent columns moved toward the Tuileries, one from the Left Bank, by way of the Quai Voltaire, the other through the Rue St. Honore. With Bonaparte in charge, Barras ordered the artillery into the streets. Bonaparte sent Joachim Murat to retrieve the guns from the Place de Sablons. When they arrived there, the Gascon and his men encountered a group of National Guardsmen harnessing the teams. When Murat threatened to cut them loose, the guardsmen backed off and Murat rushed the 40 guns back to Bonaparte.

The general took no chances.¹ A preliminary attack by the royalists was repulsed. Five hours later, a major assault began. The Republican forces held the perimeter by firing grapeshot. Local patriot battalions supported the artillery, and the royalists were defeated. Bonaparte was unharmed when his horse was shot from under him. At the close of the battle, three hundred royalists lay dead, “most of them on the steps of the Church of St. Roch. The Republic was saved.”¹⁴ Murat received a promotion to *chef de brigade* and henceforth his career was linked with Bonaparte’s.

The Convention wanted no more bloodshed and dissolved itself to make way for the new government of the Directory. The regime lasted from November 1795 to November 1799, “because the two chambers, the anciens and the cinq-cents, included representatives of all parties in the country, from royalists to regicides. It was a dictatorship that could remain in power only so long as the people were diverted from politics to war and found in victory abroad a compensation for hardship and repression at home.”²²

PLANS OF CAMPAIGN

The strength of an army, like power in mechanics, is the product of the mass by the velocity. —Napoleon

France was entering the fifth year of war. Lazare Carnot, the 'organizer of victory,' oversaw grand strategy on two fronts. The Rhine theatre under Moreau and Jourdan bore the principal effort; the Italian theater received decidedly fewer men and resources. The fact that the Austrian Alps separated the French armies made the whole scheme risky.

Bonaparte submitted his plan of the Italian Campaign to the Committee of Public Safety as early as 1794. In broad outline it envisions the march of one force on Ceva to mask the entrenched camp of the Piedmontese, while another force moved toward Acqui against the Austrians.⁴ The plan was executed broadly as originally conceived.¹⁴

General Barthelemy Schérer, the French commander in Italy, moving up the Genoese coast, had won the Battle of Loano in November. Disgusted at the lack of follow-up support from Paris, he submitted his resignation on 4 February, 1796. Bonaparte's circle of friends secured him the army command, made official on 2 March. He married Josephine in a civil ceremony one week later, after a courtship of terrific impetuosity.

After a few days of marriage, the general departed for Italy. His first care was to visit the administration in Toulon, the supply base of the army, to check on essential provisions and recruitment. He requested contributions in specie and in kind from the Municipal Administration in Marseilles to help defray expenses.

Bonaparte remained in Toulon until March 24th. That evening he reached Antibes, where he met his new chief of staff, Alexandre Berthier, a 42-year-old engineer who had been Kellermann's chief of staff.¹⁶ The conference was prolonged into the next day, and they traveled to Nice on the 27th.³

The old soldiers, who knew Bonaparte from the campaigns of 1794-95, were unimpressed. Vignolle, Berthier's assistant, wrote to Masséna of their dissatisfaction on hearing that their former comrade, after enjoying the comforts of Paris while they endured the hardships of war, would now be guiding their fate. Predicting that Bonaparte would be disgraced, Vignolle begged Masséna to save the army by superseding the ambitious young adventurer with no military reputation. Masséna possessed better military credentials than his future master; he was convinced that intrigue had brought Bonaparte to command over himself. It seemed obvious that Barras had given command of the army as a reward for putting down the royalist insurrection.¹⁴

Bonaparte would need to make an impression on the hungry ghosts he was inheriting. As his carriage sped along the coast road he slept fitfully, gazing out across the azure gulf of Genoa. To his left the Ligurian mountains jutted upward. Bonaparte dictated his first order to the cavalry and composed his famous "Proclamation of the General in Chief at the opening of the Campaign," dated 27 March 1796.

*Soldiers, you are naked, hungry;
the Government owes you a lot,
but gives you nothing.* — Corr. 91

THE THEATRE

The Austrians began the campaign with an attack at the junction of two mountain chains. Where the Apennines descend to meet the Ligurian Alps they seized two strategic passes leading to the coast—the Bocchetta dell' Altare and the Turchino. The southern hills of the Langhe and Monferrato are formed by ancient marine sediments and are subject to erosion, presenting a labyrinth of furrows and valleys. The well-exposed slopes are cultivated with vines, cereals and fodder but also orchards and hazelnut groves. The crests are frequently no more than a meter wide, with hillsides descending in gentle slopes, covered with chestnuts and meadows. Heavy fogs are very frequent on the peaks, especially in the spring.²¹



These verdant foothills belonged to the King of Sardinia-Piedmont, Victor Amadeus III, an Austrian ally. His province of Nice was already under French occupation. Savoy and his capital of Turin were protected by a ring of mountains guarded by Austrian and Piedmontese forces. His fourth province was the island of Sardinia. The neighboring city-state of Genoa, a strip of coastal lowland, was nominally neutral but inclined toward the Coalition. Since November the western part of this city-state, too, had been occupied by French arms.

THE CONTENDING ARMIES

Kaiserlich-Königlich Heer

The tradition-bound Imperial and Royal (Kaiserlich & Königlich) House of Habsburg fielded an army resting on its laurels. On 4 March 1796, Johann Peter Beaulieu was promoted to Feldzeugmeister and set-out to take command of the Habsburg Army of Italy, standing in

two separate cantonments: Argenteau's troops camped on a line running from the Bochetta Pass to Sassello (E-6103), Mansone, Campofreddo, Dego (E-2810) and Salicetto (E-0119). Ovada—southeast of Acqui, en route to the Turchino Pass—was occupied by the advanced guard. Salicetto was covered by Provera's Austrian brigade (Belgioioso I.R. 44 and the Strassoldo Grenadiers). Further north, in the Po valley around Pavia and Lodi, stood Sebottendorf with another 11,000 men.

An atmosphere of mistrust prevailed between the Coalition commanders. The 71-year-old Beaulieu had held his own in Belgium against Dumouriez in 1792 and Jourdan in 1794. The 58-year old Feldmarschal-Leutnant Baron Michelangelo Alessandro Colli Marchi led the army of Piedmont. Each army maintained its own line of communications running divergently on Mantova, the Austrian supply base, and Turin, the Piedmontese capital.¹⁷

The Belgian Count, Feldmarschal-Leutnant Eugène Guillaume Alexis von Mercy Argenteau, who owed his posting to his court connections, was the brother-in-law of French general Laharpe, who had defeated him in 1795 and would do so again at Montenotte.

The King of Sardinia had great faith in his 50,000 troops, of which 37 battalions (17,000 men) were deployed in the Tanaro and Bormida Valleys, directly in the path of the French offensive, occupying Millesimo, Corsaglia, Ellero, Pesio, Vermegnana, Gesso, Stura, and further north. Besides the best-trained Piedmontese, this formation included Provera's Austrian auxiliary corps covering Salicetto (E-0119), a German garrison battalion, and some Croations.²¹

The King held a substantial reserve force around the capital, Torino. He could have released several infantry regiments and grenadier battalions, and the whole cavalry reserve of 3,000 men who waited a 2 or 3 day march away, toward Fossano (W-0801).

L'Armée d'Italie

On 21 March, the French Army of Italy had 52,311 infantry, 3394 cavalry, and 5596 gunners and sappers. There were 60 field guns, but only twenty-four were mounted on sledges for use in the mountains. On 9 April the front-line strength was 37,705 infantry, 4868 cavalry, and 4770 artillery and engineers. When Bonaparte took command the troops were formed into six active divisions, while two second-line divisions guarded the coasts and the passages to the Rhone valley. Replacements had fallen off to a trickle.

The revolutionary regime of France had created a temperamental army "of conscripts between twenty and twenty-five years of age; whereas the professional armies contained many soldiers between thirty and forty.

The French army, less used to barracks life, was not so steady as the Austrian, but it had more enthusiasm and more natural elasticity, and less of the automatic action that results from drill."¹⁰

The French General Staff had taken an evolutionary step in organization, necessitated by the sheer magnitude of their armies. This was the creation of a permanent staff of administrative officers to take care of supply for each division. At this stage divisions had no permanent tables of organization and equipment. "Bonaparte frequently shifted brigades from division to division to meet particular situations. This flexibility, without loss of effectiveness or control, was facilitated by permanent divisional staffs—at that time, a uniquely French system."¹¹

"The term demi-brigade replaced the term regiment from 1793 on by order of Carnot. This was an attempt to dissolve the ancient dynastic and regional associations of the standing army. In the chaotic early years of war, autonomous demi-brigades of volunteers or *fedères* served alongside regular formations. These proved so unsatisfactory that, shortly before Valmy in 1792, General Kellermann decided to brigade one regular and two *fedère* battalions together in his army. This sensible step was eventually applied universally throughout the French land forces after the first Amalgam was implemented in 1794."¹⁷

For their sustenance the troops had to depend on entirely corrupt army contractors,¹⁷ in charge of the army's supplies, hospitals, and other services, who amassed fabulous fortunes.¹⁴ The transport capacity of the army, amounting to 200 mules, was entirely inadequate to feed 50,000 men. Forced to fend for themselves, the foragers received meager hospitality amidst the exhausted hills of Piedmont. The French Government, already practically bankrupt, was two months in arrears in paying them. On March 18, Sérurier's division stationed at Ormea defied orders, and on the 25th—only two days before General Bonaparte's arrival—the 3rd Battalion of the 209th Provisional Rgt. mutinied at Nice. Hunger and neglect were fast turning the army into an indisciplined rabble, and it was evident that only a successful offensive could remedy this.¹⁷

Schérer departed on March 29th after handing notes on the military situation to Major Junot, Bonaparte's secretary, along with 772,000 francs assignats of the one million received from Kellerman, and 3200 gold livres out of the 20,000 he had been given.³

Bonaparte immediately issued some back pay to the troops from this war chest. His aides-de-camps, aside from Junot who had served beside him at Toulon, were the flamboyant Gascon Colonel Joachim Murat; Jean Leonord; his brother Louis; and Marmont his fellow

gunnery student. The new artillery commander was Dujard; *commissaire ordonnateur* Chauvet was in charge of provisions. The French Army's magazines were located in Savona, on the coast. Alexandre Berthier's staff included Dutailis, Gonnoud, Ballet, Barbut and Bascaille.³

Opening Moves

The campaign was delayed because of rain in the Apennine passes. During the lull 8,000 new muskets were distributed in Masséna's two advanced guard divisions,³ the 1st AG along a front from Monte Negino to Toirano, the 2nd AG from Seigno to Melogno.

On the 26th the brigade of Cervoni had been pushed forward to the coastal town of Voltri, a mere 10 kilometers from Genoa. Bonaparte desired Masséna to pull Cervoni back as soon as possible so as not to alert the enemy of coming hostilities. General La Harpe had Monte Negino (E-5030) occupied by Rampon's brigade in order to support Cervoni's retrograde movement.²¹

Bonaparte ordered up his cavalry in two groupos in his first set of march orders on the 29th [Corr. 99]. "The first [group] comprises the 1st hussars, 10th, 22nd and 25th chasseurs, and the 5th and 20th dragoons." The first group would follow the coast road from army headquarters at Nice through Menton, San-Remo, Oneglia, Albenga and Serendra to Toirano; the stages in the marches of the chasseurs and dragoons were also given. These regiments, dispersed in cantonments well inside occupied Nice would be inactive until the plains were reached. They began moving and were available at the battles of San Michele and Mondovi.

Finally the weather cleared, and on April 1 Berthier ordered Masséna to move out. Bonaparte's first campaign was underway. On April 2, 1796, Bonaparte left Nice, taking the simple country road to la Corniche.¹⁸

His army would march along a strip of Genoese (neutral) territory, avoiding the strongly fortified Alpine passes leading into Piedmont. This move placed him between the Austrian and Piedmontese armies. Politicians helped widen the gap. "Faipoult, the French Minister to the Genoese Republic, presented a request for a permit for French troops to pass through Genoa and the Bochetta pass in order to invade Lombardy. The Senate, greatly perturbed, applied to General Beaulieu for protection." Beaulieu went for the cheese, advancing with his reserve corps through the Bochetta pass without advising Colli that he was commencing an offensive,¹⁶ and ordered General Argenteau, commanding the main body at Acqui, to advance by Sassello and Montenotte on Savona and attack the French left flank as they made

their anticipated move up the coast road. Sebottendorf's reserve corps got underway for the one week march from Pavia and Lodi. On 3 April a strong column of Austrian troops from the Po valley was noted moving through Novi and into Liguria. Argenteau's Corps collecting at Dego was reconnoitered in force by General Menard's brigade.³ Thanks to an excellent espionage system organized by Masséna and head agent Pico, the strength and location of all enemy units was known.¹⁶

On 5 April Bonaparte moved his headquarters up to Albenga, where he remained five days inspecting the troops and organizing transport. Pico brought word of Austrians advancing through the Bochetta Pass and reinforcements arriving at Sassello and Dego. Bonaparte made no change in his dispositions, merely cautioning his division commanders to be ready to move at a moment's notice with a full supply of ammunition.⁶

On 10 April Argenteau was stopped by Masséna's outpost line between Savona and Montenotte. Beaulieu accompanied Sebottendorf's column and directed it across the Turchino Pass north of Voltri. This column reached the coast at Voltri, pushing back Cervoni's brigade the next day.

Cervoni had 3,500 (later raised to 5,200) men in 5 battalions. Pittoni von Dannenfeld attacked with 5 battalions, 4 squadrons and 4 guns. Not far away was Sebottendorf with 3,200 men.

The French infantry held out in Pegli until 6 PM when they withdrew, shaking off their pursuers and falling back along the coast. Near the Turchino Pass the French infantry fell back to Mele. Pittoni occupied Voltri with 3 battalions and his uhlans. He was joined by Beaulieu around midnight.

The fight at Voltri cost the Austrians 50 killed and wounded. The French losses were 230 killed, wounded and captured. The next day Beaulieu met with Admiral Sir John Jervis, the commander of British naval squadron blockading the coast. News of Bonaparte's offensive dissuaded him from advancing toward Savona.

THE CAMPAIGN

Montenotte

Dego was the Austrian advanced base, with improved positions at Magliani and in nearby Cassinassa. Argenteau arrived on 10 April. At 3 AM the next morning he advanced with 3,700 troops from Pareto, Mioglia (E-4701) and Dego. The troops in Dego formed a separate column under Rukavina comprising 2 Hungarian bns. (Stain I.R. 50 and Pellegrini I.R. 49) with some Croations. Vukassovich's column (Kerpen with Anton I.R.

Bonaparte's mountain artillery comprised light guns and carriages, usually specially designed to be broken down into mule loads. All guns and equipment, as well as ammunition, were carried by mules. Captured Austrian pieces were used as mountain artillery, mounted on specially designed carriages, as well as Piedmontese 3-pounders. These three pounders were mounted on two kinds of carriages; those taken from the Piedmontese had wheel carriages; the French made use of them, but constructed none of this first kind. The other were of French construction, and had chevrette carriages. The wheel carriage, however, appears the most preferable, because the piece stands higher, its service is easier, and is not so liable to upset as the chevrette carriage, when the piece is fired; the weight is the same, but is of more difficult construction. Both can be carried on mules, each weighing about 120 lbs. The wheel carriage has an iron pointing plate, which is fixed with a hinge at the head of the carriage, and, by means of a bolt which traverses both the flasks at the other end, can be placed at three degrees of elevation. This, with a very short pointing screw, gives the facility of leveling the piece 3° above or below the horizon, which in mountains is very important. The button of the piece is hollowed; the end of the pointing vice is forked in two branches, each of which have a hole to receive a bolt, which, passing also through the button, prevents the jerking of the piece when it is fired.

— *Weapons & Warfare* <https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2018/07/09/french-artillery-napoleonic-wars-i/>

Chevrette: A machine for hoisting guns upon their carriages.

52, and Alvinczi I.R 19; 3 bns altogether) captured Bric del Chiodo and Bric Tavernin. Driving the French back, they arrived at the foot of Monte-Negino and captured the first flèche.

General Rampon launched a counter-attack at the head of 900 men of the II/21st D.B. and three companies of carabinieri. Rukavina was wounded and returned to Dego. After 4 PM the fighting died down, and Cervoni's column moved up toward Madonna. Rampon received a reinforcement of four guns and 700 men. The weather was overcast with rain overnight. The Terzi I.R. 16 arrived to cover the Austrian rear.²¹

The next morning, La Harpe's 6,000 French troops left Savona and joined Cervoni's column of 4,500 men, moving past Maison Doria (E-4531) toward Monte Negino. Col. Rampon was ordered to send 900 men with four guns out of the Monte Negino redoubt to Maison Doria and join the attack on Argenteau's 6,000 Austrians at Montenotte. La Harpe mounted a frontal attack on the position while Masséna, at the head of Menard's brigade, worked round the Austrian right flank. As the fog lifted Argenteau realized the peril in front of him and ordered a retreat. Masséna's troops, appearing unexpectedly from the woods above the town,

routed the retiring Austrians and then formed a defensive perimeter around Montenotte. The Austrians withdrew to Dego, Cosseria and Montezemolo. Argenteau was almost taken prisoner withdrawing to Pareto, by way of Ponte Invrea and Mioglia. An Austrian rear guard on Ca dell'Isola (E-4922) were overwhelmed without firing a shot.²¹

Carcare

During the night Argenteau's immediate command dwindled to 700 men. Beaulieu, still near Genoa, probably learned of the disaster and ordered his army to withdraw by the same way it came. In order to prevent any of Argenteau's men from joining-up with the Piedmontese, Masséna ordered his men to occupy Carcare, but the leading units of Augereau's columns reached the vital crossroads first. Masséna was ordered to the Cairo heights and to capture Dego.

Cosseria

As the spearhead of Bonaparte's push against the Piedmontese, Augereau's advance on Ceva came to a halt before the ruins of Cosseria castle, defended by Piedmontese grenadiers and Austrian infantry under the Austrian General Giovanni Provera, whose force had been linking the Austrian and Piedmontese sectors, defying several costly attempts to dislodge them. By the morning of the 14th, however, they were low on cartridges and out of water, and entered into negotiations for surrender.

Austrian reinforcement Vukassovich spent the night of the 14th with 4,000 men in Sassello. From there they moved to Mioglia and Dego.²¹

Dego

Masséna's strong French division assaulted the town of Dego about noon, and shortly captured most of the 5,000 Austrians and 19 guns. Leaving Masséna to hold the town, Bonaparte retraced his steps to the west at the head of La Harpe's Division, hoping to meet Sérurier nearby (who was about to appear on the center map).

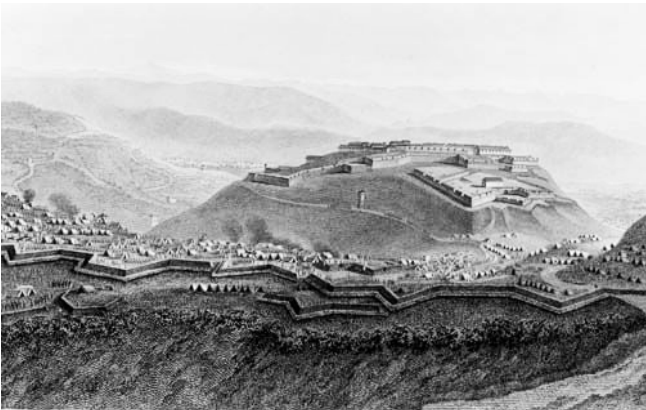
Masséna's victorious men, hungry and exhausted, scattered in search of provisions. In the early hours of the next morning, five Austrian battalions under Vukassovich surprised the town, routed the defenders, and re-captured all their guns. Vukassovich consolidated the position, preparing defenses in the village. La Harpe's worn-out men and the reserve hurried back north to Dego. Linking up with Masséna's rallied units,

they stormed the village and overthrew the Austrians. Thenceforth the Piedmontese were on their own.

Ceva

On the 16th, Sérurier and Augereau drove Colli out of Montezemolo into the fortified camp of Ceva. Augereau's three brigades (Joubert's 11th, Beyrand's 4th and Rusca) attacked the naturally strong position of the Pedaggera Pass. Augereau had 10,000 men, only a part of whom actually took part in the battle. This was Bonaparte's hasty attempt to defeat the Sardinians using only one fourth of his total force, while the bulk of his army was facing Beaulieu. Colli saw that he would be outflanked by superior French columns maneuvering to bypass the Pedaggera line to the north and south. As the French prepared a reinforced assault on the night of the 17th, Colli withdrew unmolested to a strong position at the village of San Michele and along the Corsaglia River, down to its confluence with the Tanaro.

The citadel of Ceva continued to resist. Count Tornaforte with 500 men refused to surrender. The impetuous General Rusca launched an unprepared assault on



some forward redoubts, easily beaten back with the loss of 2 French guns. The next day, a French battery with 6 guns was also taken out by the fortress artillery.²⁰

The furious Rusca intended to attack the citadel once more, but in reality the fortress was impregnable as long as the French did not have any siege artillery. Bonaparte finally arrived and ordered Rusca to wait for the siege artillery before taking any further action.²⁰

The Corsaglia River Line

The corps of Baron Colli still had 12,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, near Mondovì or further to the rear. The Tanaro-Corsaglia River line, was the final obstacle to slow the French advance toward Mondovì.²⁰

The center of the line was the fortified hill of la Bicocca di San Giacomo, with its bridge across the Corsaglia. The river bank was lined by two grenadier battalions (8th and 9th, 800 men in all) led by a highly respected fighting man, Marquis Dichat. The bridge was garrisoned by the 2nd Swiss Grenadier company from the Christ Regiment with 2 guns and a heavy battery of 6 guns. Behind them, on the hill, stood 2,000 men: two Guards battalions, one Savoy battalion, one Marine battalion, and two grenadier battalions under Varax, a Savoyard officer of proven ability. The force was led by two excellent Piedmontese officers, brigadier Solaro della **Chiusa** (a veteran grenadier commander) and brigadier **Civalieri**.²⁰

Along the left sector of the line, Colli deployed 10 battalions with 3,400 infantry (including 1,000 Austrians) and 1,500 dragoons, under brigadier Brempt. These troops should also keep the line of retreat of the whole corps safe and open.

In the center, 13 infantry battalions with 4,000 men and 300 cavalymen of the Royal Piedmont Regiment.

On the right, 2,000 men including some Royal Grenadiers, Nice Chasseurs, and Light Legion troops. The main stronghold was the Capella del Buon Gesu di San Michele, defended by Captain Radicati di Primeglio with Light Legion elements and an artillery battery. The 1st Grenadier battalion from the Chiusano regiment connected (W-3829) the stronghold to the village of San Michele (W-3828).²⁰

All along the line, several well-placed artillery batteries added firepower to the defense. The line, however, had one serious flaw. The Bicocca stronghold formed sort of a bulge towards the French lines, subject to a two-pronged attack from the north and south to cut it off from the defensive line, which was exactly what the French planned to do. The line was garrisoned by 8,000 men in all.²⁰

Bonaparte's Plan

Bonaparte planned to use two divisions (Augereau and Sérurier), each with 6,000 men, possibly reinforced by a third one (Masséna). Sérurier would attack the southern sector of the line, Augereau the center. Sérurier had at his disposal a relatively important cavalry force of 14 squadrons under generals Beaumont and Stengel to be used after Sérurier's breakthrough to cut the Piedmontese line of retreat.²⁰

Bonaparte was in a hurry to close this chapter of the war against Piedmont and quickly mounted a push by two divisions, ignoring advice to proceed more carefully. Stengel had realized the strength of the Corsaglia line, and recommended adding Masséna's firepower to

Augereau's and to reconnoitre the line more closely. Both recommendations were turned down. In the night between 18 and 19 April, Bonaparte ordered the attack. In the coming assault on the natural bulwark of the Corsaglia line, the French suffered the most humbling setback of the campaign.²⁰

The Corsaglia River was in full spate, the cliff on the far bank looked impassable, and the Piedmontese artillery opened up with a well-directed fire. Augereau's attack stalled immediately and was called off.²⁰

Sérurier had divided his force into two columns, one under **Guyeux** heading for the southernmost sector of the line, and another under Fiorella a little to the north. Both halted on the right bank of the river, unable to cross it and exposed to the artillery fire. Guyeux caught elements of **Bellegarde's Light Legion** still on the eastern bank, eating their food ration, but those could escape and reach the western bank as a Piedmontese artillery battery was holding up the French.²⁰

Sérurier was seriously wondering about aborting the whole operation, when the French saw some Light Legion soldiers withdrawing across the river on a wooden aqueduct. The Piedmontese did not destroy the crossing, leaving it intact and practically unguarded.

The Light Legion commander, Radicati, had made a mistake leaving the bridge in place and not garrisoning it. The French weren't snoozing and immediately exploited. Undetected, Guyeux's brigade crossed the footbridge and swooped on Radicati, whose hasty counterattack was brushed aside in disorder. The French used their famous speed to rush to the village of San Michele, overrunning an artillery battery in the process while Sérurier from the other bank was keeping the San Michele defenders (mostly Dichat Grenadiers) pinned down.²⁰

To counter Guyeux's attack on his right, Dichat had to withdraw the grenadiers blocking the main bridge over the Corsaglia, and Fiorella's brigade was now free to cross it. While Dichat was holding out inside the village with his grenadiers, the remainder of the troops in his sector began to melt away, and the sector crumbled. Fiorella's troops pursued the defenders streaming to the rear and Dichat was cut off. A successful attempt by a Grenadier Guards company to retake the artillery battery ended up in disaster when an explosive charge meant to blow up the French, went off instead amid the Guards, killing 14 and wounding 26 grenadiers and putting the company hors de combat.²⁰

Surrounded from all sides, facing odds of 1:6, Dichat's 600 grenadiers and artillerymen had to give up after a desperate house-to-house combat in San Michele. They were all taken prisoner. It was 1.30 PM.

If either Augereau or Masséna had been there to exploit the success, the French victory would have been crushing.

Instead, the emaciated French stopped to loot the village and cohesion disappeared as hordes of famished soldiers broke into houses, drinking and pillaging.

The Swiss Counterattack

All this time a Swiss company was lying in wait in a house near the bridge—Captain Schreiber's Swiss Grenadiers from the Grisons Regiment, with 73 men. Schreiber boldly jumped into the fray. His little, high-morale unit first seized a gun the French had left unguarded and turned it against them, then proceeded to reach Dichat's grenadiers and set them free. Dichat bribed the French sergeant guarding him to fain his release. He rearmed his men with their muskets stacked nearby, and, along with Schreiber, attacked the stunned French scattered all over the village.²⁰

In the meantime, Colli—informed about the San Michele breakthrough—showed up at the Bicocca area and mounted a quick counterattack with the Grenadier Guards, Varax's Grenadiers and the 1st battalion, Savoy Regiment. The sight of the grenadiers' bayonets was too much for Sérurier's division, stampeding for the bridge and the safety of the opposite bank. Many fell into the river and drowned. Some French officers trying to stop the rout were shot at by their own soldiers.

One Savoy platoon led by Lieutenant J.G. Duchany, flushed with victory, crossed the river and overran two French guns before recrossing to avoid annihilation.

The battle was a defeat for the French. Guyeux held a tiny bridgehead on the western bank, but aside from that, Sérurier's division was repulsed altogether. The French lost 600 or 700 dead and wounded, 100 prisoners and one flag (46th Demi-Brigade). The Piedmontese lost 150 dead and 200 wounded. Schreiber's Swiss company lost 70%.²⁰

The Piedmontese had won a clear-cut tactical victory, and French were shaken. The Piedmontese held on firmly, but Beaulieu's intentions were unclear. Bonaparte could not rule out Austrian intervention during the engagement with Colli—a possibility that might bring disaster. He could only keep attacking, relying on his superior numbers and mobility. His men were tired and somewhat discouraged, and a halt might well prove fatal.²⁰

Mondovi

Colli decamped during the night toward Mondovi to organize a delaying action so the army's depots at Breo could be removed. "It had been raining continually for days, and the snow was beginning to melt in the mountains, swelling the rivers and reducing the roads to a terrible state..."²³ The divisions of Sérurier and Meynier crossed at San Michele and La Torre. They pushed the Piedmontese off the heights of Vicoforte threatening to envelop them in Mondovi. The Piedmontese were forced to abandon the town and its well-stocked arsenal. As Stengel's cavalry rode toward the enemy line of retreat, this cavalry leader—the army's most experienced—was killed in a skirmish with Colli's cavalry screen.

Cherasco

On April 23, Bonaparte advanced on Turin. Masséna and Augereau crossed the Tanaro River at Cherasco and Alba; Sérurier sent part of his force from Mondovi toward the bridge at Fossano. The last major barrier on the road to Turin was passed, and only 12,000 Piedmontese stood between Bonaparte and King Victor Amadeus III. On April 25, in a downpour of rain, Bonaparte left for Cherasco where, the next day, he made his famous proclamation to the Army of Italy.¹⁸

On the morning of April 27, Victor Amadeus signed the Armistice of Cherasco, forsaking his Austrian allies, and taking his forces out of the war.¹⁸ French cantonments were extended to the line of the Stura, and French garrisons entered Ceva, Cuneo and Tortona. Now established on the fertile plains of Piedmont, the French found all they needed. The campaign was about to shift northward into the Po valley.

"Soldiers, in fifteen days you have won six victories, captured 21 colors, 55 cannon, several fortresses, and conquered the richest part of Piedmont; you have taken 15,000 prisoners, killed or wounded more than 10,000 men."

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24. *L'armée d'Italie à la date du 09 avril 1796 se composait ainsi* (après les archives de Guerre).

MAP SOURCES—Paolo Scannapieco

The main cartographic resource used for *Bonaparte Overruns Piedmont* maps was the "*Carta Topografica degli Stati in Terraferma di S.M. il Re di Sardegna alla scala di 1 a 50.000, opera del Corpo Reale dello Stato Maggiore*" ("Topographic Map of H.M. the King of Sardinia's Mainland States at 1:50,000 scale, by the General Staff Royal Corps", 1852-1868) and to a lesser degree the "*Carta degli Stati Sardi, Torino*" ("Map of Sardinian States, Turin", 1816-1830).

The first of the two, also called "*Gran Carta degli Stati Sardi in Terraferma, divisa in fogli 91 alla scala di 1:50,000, pubblicata dal Corpo Reale di Stato Maggiore*" ("Great Map of Mainland Sardinian States, divided in 91 sheets at 1:50,000 scale, published by the General Staff Royal Corps"), was created by the Sardinian Kingdom Army General Staff Royal Corps between 1852 and 1868 in 91 lithographed sheets at a 1:50,000 scale to map the whole mainland territory of the Sardinian Kingdom (excluding the islands). The document shows settlements, roads, watercourses, relief and crops/vegetation, with color only used for watercourses and acronyms about crop/vegetation quality and rock/metal types.

The second one, also called “*Carta topografica degli Stati di Terra-ferma di S.S.R.M. Carlo Alberto Re di Sardegna fatta dal Corpo di Stato Maggiore Generale alla scala di 1/50.000*” (“Topographic Map of H.H.R.M. Carlo Alberto King of Sardinia’s Mainland States made by General Staff Corps at 1:50,000 scale”), is divided in 112 sheets and was surveyed and drawn up between 1816 and 1830 by the Sardinian Kingdom Army General Staff Royal Corps at 1:50,000 scale to map the whole mainland territory of the Sardinian Kingdom. It denotes a remarkable graphic quality and highlights with different signs the terrain features, roads and crops.

The 1852-1868 map is an update of the 1816-1830 map and, compared with the latter, has fewer details and is easier to read. In both maps orthography is rendered with oblique light hatching and shading. In addition some maps (mostly French, contemporary to 1796) of the Mondovì and Ceva surroundings were consulted to get details about the trace of the fortifications.

DESIGN NOTES

Kevin Zucker

To open the campaign Bonaparte launched a series of infantry attacks at Montenotte; from there the offensive followed the Tanaro River valley to Mondovì. The operation spans a playing area of 14.5 square feet with our lowest counter density yet.

Ranging over the mountains and rolling hills of Piedmont, this contest focused on the river valleys of the Bormida, Tanaro and Corsaglia, heavily-folded terrain in which a small unit or a roadblock can effectively delay a large force. These assume greater significance, along with the Fortified Towns, I.P.s and Chateaux that can impede the progress of the French advance through narrow passes.

These are scaled-down armies, with the French maneuvering by “Demi-Brigades” (regiments). The French have just three large divisions, around 9,000 men in each; later these are joined by a fourth infantry and two small cavalry divisions. The mix is at the regiment-brigade level, allowing armies to spread out a little more. Though the total manpower of these armies is small, detachments bring more units into play. Several Austrian brigades broke into parts and operated independently. So plotting the set up required more research than usual. Set ups have been worked-over extensively.

We credit the Coalition road blocks—three or more companies—with the ability to cause delays. They were supposed to man the barricades long enough that the enemy would be forced to deploy in attack mode. While that mode change takes place, they skedaddle.

Tactics were in flux, as always during wartime, and

the most radical developments were of French origin. Austrian generals clearly understood there should be some detachments to delay the enemy advance—Argenteau stuck roadblocks all over Montenotte mountain—but somehow the actual techniques and methods of fighting hit and run hadn't filtered down to the troops. So, during the pursuit after Montenotte, the French would arrive and the three companies would fight for a bit and then surrender. They didn't have an idea of light infantry tactics, except for specialized light infantry units such as Colonel Leonardo Colli-Ricci's Piedmontese chasseurs. This unit played a prominent rôle in the campaign.

The Piedmontese Army had no consistency except when deployed in line of battle. It failed at meeting engagements and lacked much general direction. This is shown by the lack of officers. Through the course of the campaign, you see the Piedmontese fighting pretty well from set defensive positions (Cosseria, la Pedaggera, Corsaglia), but advances were only made by single battalions, like the Austrians. The Piedmontese Army consisted of good troops and militia units of questionable value. Their morale was good at the start of the campaign. By the time of Mondovì they saw their comrades falling back and immediately routed. The last fight was the cumulative morale effect of falling back repeatedly. So we decided on a lower demo level of 35% (instead of the standard 40%) for Piedmont.

For the French OrBat Enrico Acerbi provided *L'armée d'Italie à la date du 09 avril 1796 se composait ainsi (d'après les archives de Guerre)*. Unfortunately, the French Army was in the process of re-numbering all their infantry units (the Second *Amalgame*), leading to great confusion.

The Second Amalgame, decreed on 8 January 1796, merged understrength battalions to make full battalions. More than half of the existing battalions were dissolved along with 45% of squadrons. The battalions were grouped to form demi-brigades. Eight old battalions, up to as many as 22, were required to form a demi-brigade of three-battalions. In the amalgamation process 25,000 of the most “inefficient” officers became supernumeraries and were retired. The purge of these officers came at the right time, improving the chain of command in the Army of Italy. By April, many Demi-Brigades still bore their old designations—the 3rd Lt. D.B. retained that designation until November (see Set-up, Composition).

On the game maps you will notice many mountain peak names. These crags with their distinctive silhouettes were points of geolocation for the opposing forces, often cited in historical accounts.

PAGE 19: VOHLERS NOTES (B&W)

PAGE 20: COMBAT TABLES (B&W)



The rolling hills of Piedmont

The Appenine mountain chain stands close to the Mediterranean. Its hillsides in Piedmont are prolonged, gentle slopes, covered with chestnuts and meadows, while those on the side of the sea are quite steep, rockier, and generally offer only a few arable places in the valleys. The greatest number are covered with heather and woods of little value: chestnuts, hazel, beech, and some yoke elms. The crests are cultivated here and there, by clearing some of the woods which cover them.

This part of the Appenines, known as Montenotte Mountain, is the summit of the Erro basin and dominates the two hamlets of the same name. General Argenteau had been forced there, without a doubt, but he had been able to fight with good success, and he could have avoided the shameful rout that he suffered as a result of not knowing his position, as one must do when on a military expedition.

Four quite distinct roads run through here to reach the Piedmont. One arrives via the crest of Castelazzo, another passes through the Erro valley, a third passes over the crest of the Appenines, and fourth is the road from Dego and Rochetta Cairo, passing via the crest of Cianla to move south of Castelazzo. All these roads are very poor, steep and in general require the use of horses accustomed to mountains, or mules, in order to traverse them.

—MEMOIRS ON THE 1796 CAMPAIGN IN ITALY, CAPTAIN G. FABRY, 101st INFANTRY REGIMENT, 1905 ²¹