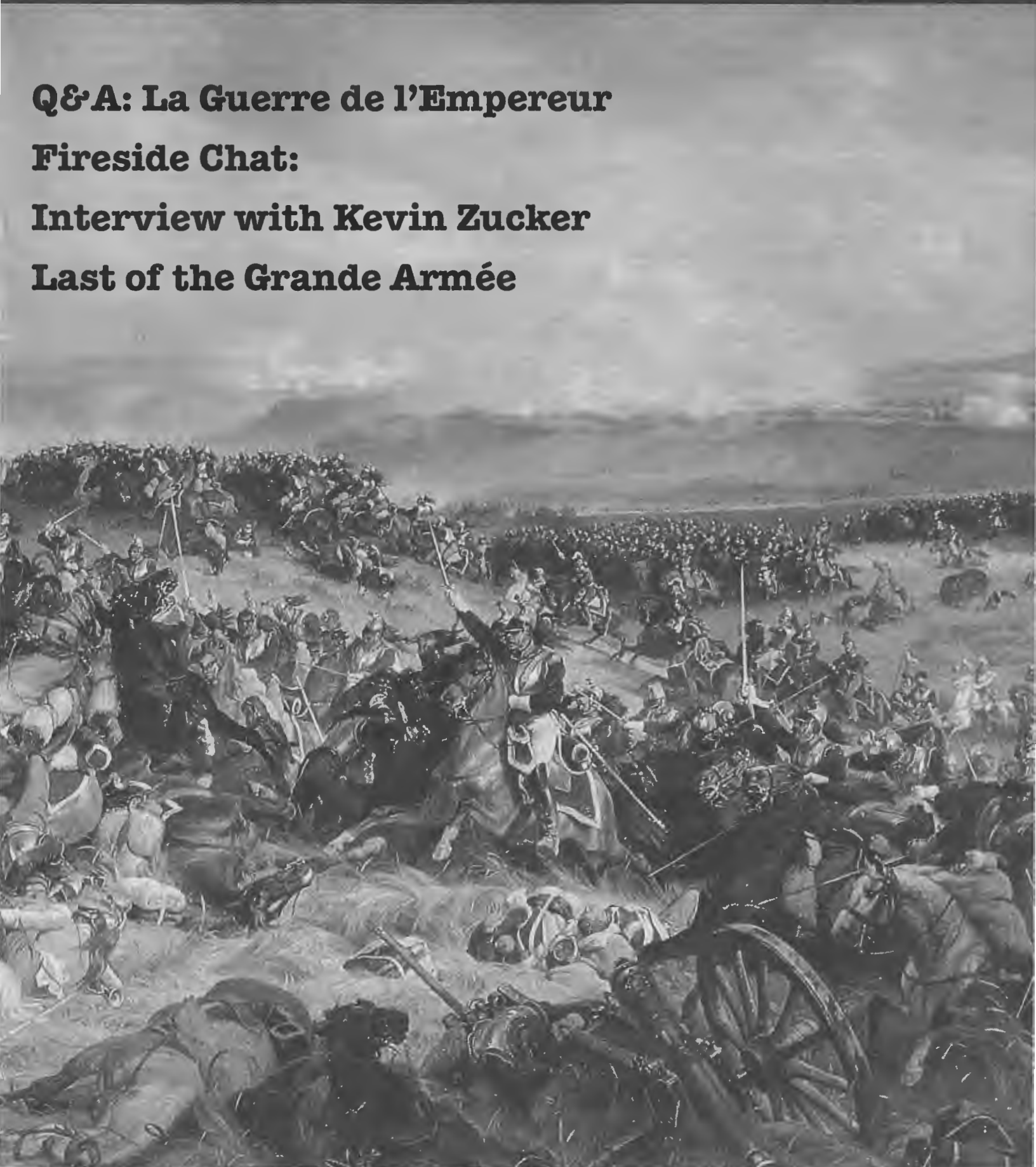


Q&A: La Guerre de l'Empereur

Fireside Chat:

Interview with Kevin Zucker

Last of the Grande Armée



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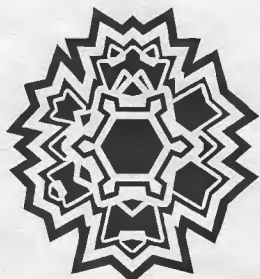
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Please provide a self-addressed stamped envelope with your questions. Email questions will be answered. For international queries, provide an international postal reply coupon. Help us by typing or printing your questions. **Very important:** Begin by stating the specific rules heading in question with its case number, if any. If you can, phrase your questions so they can be answered with a one-word reply. NOTE: Use your noodle.



**OPERATIONAL
STUDIES GROUP**

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Simulogos

Wargame Design Magazine will soon be available to download from the web. This is an important step for us and means you will receive the magazine quicker, while the electronic magazine can expand beyond an economically-determined number of pages. It also means we have an opportunity for significant savings in printing and postage costs. We will continue to print and mail-out copies, so please let us know if you promise to download your issue electronically and we will discontinue your mail subscription.

Wargame Design back issues (Volume I and Vol. II Nrs. 1 & 2 only) will continue to be available on Magweb at:

<http://www.magweb.com>

You will find later issues of *Wargame Design* on the web at:

<http://www.charm.net/~kzucker/osg>

In addition you will find there company updates and announcements.

You can join in a discussion of OSG products, and find answers to your rules questions at "Company Support—Operational Studies Group" on John Kranz's website devoted to our games:

<http://talk.Consimworld.com/WebX/>

We have been going back and forth about releasing half of our print-run in ziplock packaging instead of boxes. The printed cover sheet would be trimmed and placed inside the ziplock. The main reason for doing this is to reduce the price that you pay for our products. The savings to you would be about \$6 per game. We would like to know if a significant proportion of gamers would prefer their games in ziplock packaging. Please contact us and let us know—to make sense this would have to represent about half our audience.

The first OSG *Retreat* was held on September 25th. We rented a bunch of tables and had plenty of space for open gaming. If the number of participants warrants it next time, we will rent an appropriate space. But for now, we are planning the next gaming event for OSG's "Retreat" in Baltimore, on the third weekend in April 1999.

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The Habit of Victory

This project has been delayed—the advantage to be taken, though, is that the results of our reconnaissance of the battlefields have been incorporated into the text. I have only just now sent off a modified final draft to the Publisher, Greenhill Books. The book is scheduled for publication in 1999.

The 1998 Napoleonic Tour

Nine grognards signed-up for the tour—two Finns, two Belgians, one Dane, one German, and three from the States—plus an equal number of Polish guides. We had a great time, and got to see all the battlefields and river crossings of the campaign (including Modlin, below—the view is of the Narew and Vistula looking toward Warsaw). I was thrilled to finally see the Masurian Lakes district. The hills were much more gentle and rolling than I imagined. It rained constantly, but the fields were green, and we didn't mind getting wet. At Jonkovo we saw a complete double rainbow that stopped everything—we walked back to the bus through the muddy field in silence. From there one of the greatest adventures of the tour was just ahead of us. We decided to take a very obscure road to Bergfried, an outpost of Bennigsen's front line. The road was barely wide enough for our bus, and the paving stones were narrower than our wheelbase until they too ran out. We proceeded at about 5 miles an hour with branches scraping the top and sides of the bus. When we reached Bergfried, a railroad overpass appeared too low for us, but we managed to clear it with 2" to spare. And that was just part of one day! Check for more pictures on the Tour Webpage—http://www.charm.net/~kzucker/hq/html/tour_1998.html



Marketing

We are in the process of consolidating all our warehousing and shipping operations in Phoenixville, PA, with our affiliate, Clash of Arms Games. Beth Queman of Admiralty House did a great job for us, and we look forward to working with her as graphic artist on OSG products. Please note: direct all future orders by phone or fax to Clash of Arms's office at 1(610) 935-7622. The address for mail orders remains as before—P.O. Box 50207—Baltimore, MD 21211.

Our marketing cooperation with Clash of Arms will be increasing. Despite binding agreements, our products continued to find their way to unauthorized outlets which undercut the competition, undermining all involved. The distribution system is suppose to get the games onto store shelves where folks might see them, and to help support the overhead devoted to providing gaming space in the game stores. Unfortunately, the only way to control access to our products is to require that all outlets maintain a store front with regular business hours.

In conjunction with Clash of Arms, we will therefore begin to market our games directly to the stores. This move is made more urgent by the collapse of several distributors, which has resulted in the quantity of games we can move via distributors crashing through a critical level. Talk to your retailer and let him know you'd like him to continue to stock OSG products, and remind him too that he can order our games along with Clash of Arms Products in a single phone call.

Now with the demise of the last large publisher in wargaming, we'd like to take up some of the slack. However, we cannot do anything without your support. Remember: the purchase of an OSG game is a vote for a steady stream of new OSG publications.

We are working on plans for a new magazine, *Operational Studies Quarterly*, with 48 pages, 16 in color, and a game in every issue. The map will be 22" x 17" with 280 counters and 12—16 pages of rules.

We won't spend time providing the standard historical narrative—we assume you know the basis, or know where to find them.

Our approach will be to use the game as the starting point of the article, as a tool for uncovering the past, to learn about the campaign, to make discoveries that have never yet been written. We'll promise there will be little you already know; we'll just skip over commonplaces. You're going to have to pay attention though. The articles will bring together unusual data. We won't restrict them to recounting battles and campaigns; we'll explore military biography, cultural transformations brought about by war, even the impact of anti-war movements through the ages. We'll explore what it was like to be General Eisenhower's driver, a famous spy, or a shell-shocked grunt. We will look at the havoc left behind by the simple move of an Infantry Division across the French countryside, or at how many hands were involved in moving a can of 'c' rations across the Atlantic in '44.

This will all be tied-in to the game components. The articles will always lead back into the game. We won't do reviews of games or books, no calendar of events. The magazine will sell for about \$30 per issue. (\$22.50/issue by subscription.)

Q&A: La Guerre de l'Empereur

You need not read all the questions below. Just keep the FAQ handy when you play the game, and look for the answers as the need arises referring to the case number of the rule in question.

NOTE—There are four CHANGES [at 5.121, 5.122, 5.512 and Event Table #1] and the Victory Levels [7.1].

2.0. The rules contain 16 pages. The record sheet is printed on one side only. MAKE SEVERAL XEROXES before beginning the game!

2.23. Can corps mix nationalities (i.e. can a British Division be in the Portugese Corps)? A) No.

2.4. The "army-vs.-garrison" combat grid mentioned is entitled "Siege Combat" and appears on the map.

2.6. A leader can choose from among all the options for the appropriate die roll under lower-rated leaders as well as the column for his own rating. EXAMPLE: "Offensive Combat Options," Leader rating 2, die roll 3—the leader could choose Probe, Grand Assault, or Cavalry Charge in addition to Combined Arms.

3.31 How are replacements/ reinforcements for NPCs handled? Do players build them or is it limited the forces on the player mat?
A) This is explained under "NPC Gold" (3.31)

4.22. What happens when a country runs out of money but obtains a result that calls for a further cost to them. eg: trade loss or surrender condition.
A) Pay it back as the first expenditure in the next Expense Step.

4.3. The rule states "Each country must also pay 10 gold for each non-player country (NPC) they currently control." Does this refer to Allied NPCs, Controlled NPCs, or both?
A) Only to Allied NPCs (not Controlled NPCs).

4.72 and TABLES. If a one-time event is rolled but the criteria to allow it are not met, does the mere die roll count in preventing a future occurrence of the event? A) No.

5.11 May a Negotiated Peace be offered to just one of an alliance? If accepted is this a breaking of the alliance?
A) Yes, and Yes.

5.121 What happens if a player loses his capital? I couldn't see any penalty other than Gold and VPs lost during the winterphase.
A) CHANGE. Loss of a PC or NPC capital forces a delayed surrender. Instead of an automatic surrender, the nation which lost its capital has until the end of its next player turn to recapture it. If the capital is not recaptured by the end of its next player turn the nation must then surrender. Note that this change replaces prior errata, and applies to PCs and NPCs alike.

5.122 Allied NPC Surrender
If an NPC's capital is captured, it must surrender at the end of its next turn, returning any territory captured during that turn, provided the capital still contains an enemy garrison.

5.124 Enforced Peace
When a major power accepts the surrender of an NPC or another major power OR when a negotiated peace is agreed to, neither nation may declare war on the other for one year (3 combat seasons). For example, if Prussia surrenders to France in the Summer of 1806, France could not again declare war on Prussia until at least Fall of 1807. These enforced peace situations are recorded on the Record Sheet; there are no VPs awarded for enforced peace other than those associated with a surrender.

5.125. How can a country cede more than one province in a surrender if the option can only be chosen once? A) It cannot.

Which groups are you referring to in section 5.125, the charts or the written ones in the rulebook?

A) The explanations in the rules refer to the brief descriptions on the cards. There are actually only five different surrender terms in three groups. In the rules they are not grouped as they are on the cards. 5.125 elaborates the five but doesn't indicate the groupings. [The last item is somewhat out of sequence though.] NOTE: Not every surrender term group includes giving up control of one province (the rule seems to indicate it does).

A ceded province should be one occupied by the victor's troops and should adjoin the victor's territory if possible. Reminder: Home provinces may not be ceded unless there are no controlled non-home provinces to cede. EXCEPTION: "remapped country" home provinces (4.73) are considered to be non-home provinces.

Assume France gains free passage in Austria to attack Russia. Russia wants to move into Austria to counter-attack the French, but can't ally with the Austrians (because of the enforced peace), and doesn't wish to declare war on them. What happens?

A) If Russia moves against the French in Austria he must declare war on Austria. Austria has promised to guarantee passage through her territory for the French. That means she has an obligation to attack any foreign troops that intervene in her territory, even if her sympathies lie with the Russians.

5.126 Return of Home Provinces
The surrendering power's troops must evacuate any home provinces of the victor they occupy, with the exception of those previously ceded as war reparations—they are no longer considered to be "home provinces."

When redeploying victorious corps from a defeated enemy's home provinces, where must they go?
A) They must be displaced to the closest friendly-occupied province.

5.22. The rule states "If an allied NPC surrendered during the previous peace step, the alliance is considered broken."

But what about this situation: Britain has Austria as an allied NPC. France and Russia are not allied, but are both at war with Austria and Britain. If Austria surrenders to Russia (so as to avoid the two-front war), but not to France, should the alliance with Britain be broken?
A) Yes.

5.24. Since the British start the game in control of Portugal, do they get the use of the corps and ship that start in play? A) Absolutely.

If I capture Holland, when can I use its fleet?
A) The next turn.

5.25 When an Allied NPC conquers a minor country, can their Player Country ally pay to raise minor country troops for them? For example, if Austria is allied to Britain, and holds Bavaria, can the British pay to raise Bavarian troops?
A) Yes.

5.26-5.27. TRADING PROVINCES: Can you have your NPC allies cede to you all of their conquered territories, or does this rule only apply to PC allies? Also, can you cede provinces any time, or only during the winter dip. phase, like trading and selling provinces? We decided only PC allies could cede territories (since, if NPC Turkey were being run by a real person, he/she wouldn't go handing over all his/her goodies to the French player!). This decision affected game play by forcing players to lay siege with national troops, then moving in allied troops to defend against counterattack. Not a bad end result. I landed English in Denmark, rather than take it w/friendly Prussian Troops and lose VP's.

A) Allied NPC's cannot cede or trade their provinces (except as a condition of surrender), only PC allies may voluntarily give up their provinces.

5.28 When exactly do you make cancellation rolls? At the moment that the Coalition, Alliance or War is declared?
A) Yes.

Can you attempt multiple rolls to cancel a specific declaration in one turn (paying each time)? A) No.

5.41. Can a just-invaded port serve as a base for a fleet? A) Yes.
If a fleet moves four areas and launches an invasion and the invasion fails, the fleet would have no movement points and could be in a sea area without a friendly sea port. What happens to the fleet?
A) It returns to the nearest sea area with a friendly port.
EXAMPLE: the British fleet drops off troops in Normandy. Later in the same Player turn, the British troops roll on the siege table. The fleet is at anchor offshore, not actually in any port as yet. If the siege fails, the troops are lost and the fleet is back at sea. If they succeed, the fleet is in port.

5.42 Can Constantinople block movement by hostile fleets through the sea zone? A) No. But see suggested House Rule below (5.514): make the Constantinople sea zone Ottoman Territory.

5.421 Does a fleet leaving a port pay one or two for the first sea zone entered (i.e. +1 for leaving the port and 1 for the sea zone)?
A) It pays a total of one.

5.424. How many divisions can a British Transport carry? A) Three.

5.43. If I attack a blockading fleet with a non-blockaded fleet is sighting automatic?
A) Yes. If you're blockading, your fleets are automatically found.

5.431 If a Fleet tries to intercept from port and fails, where does it end up?
A) It remains in port.

5.44. If a squadron loses a battle and returns to port, can it try to intercept other enemy squadrons entering its sea area?
A) Yes, but it gets the "in port" modifier.

5.46. Do invasions take place during land or sea moves? A) Land.

They had no where to retreat to and were all lost. A) Correct

5.51 Can a stack pick up other stacks (previously unmoved) enroute to a battle? By Land or Sea
A) Yes. And, you can also drop guys off to protect your LOC.

Can a just conquered province by one stack then be moved through by a subsequent stack?
A) No. The province becomes "friendly" at the end of the Player Turn. Aide memoir: put new garrisons on the map face-down, and then flip them at the end of your player turn. You may move other friendly forces INTO but not THROUGH a province with face down garrison.

Can you move between provinces that touch only at an apex? e.g., Bavaria to Vienna, Prague to Thuringia? A) No.

5.512. HISTORICAL NOTE: Gibraltar's location at the end of a precipitous narrow neck of land rendered it effectively impregnable to attack.

A) CHANGE: Gibraltar may never be attacked or besieged by land—nor may any land corps occupy Gibraltar.

If a siege fails with one stack, can a separate stack (not originating in the same province) also besiege the same province subsequent to the first attempt?
A) No. Garrisons can only be attacked by 1 enemy stack per turn. You can't attack with one force and, if you fail, attack again with a different force.

Can a player move a stack through a non-conquered province without laying siege if just passing through to pursue a field army that just retreated? If not in pursuit can it still do this?

A) No, and No.

Example: Kurt's Russians entered Switzerland (1 MP) and attacked the Spanish army there (2 MP). After the battle, they laid siege to the French Garrison (3 MP), and failed. Not wanting to lay siege further, Kurt wanted to leave Switzerland, falling back into his own territory (4 MP),

Q&A: La Guerre

We agreed that landing corps could not continue moving beyond the landing/invasion area?

A) Correct.

I assume that the invaders continue to attack until they are on the beach or dead?

A) Yes.

In theory is it correct that this could result in more attacks than allowed by movement points? A) No.

Is there any capacity for sea evacuation?

For instance we had two occurrences of the English landing on the continent, taking a province and then being defeated.

5.513. The rule states "After all land units have moved, play proceeds to the next phase, Land Combat." Is this erroneous?

A) Yes! Stacks move and fight, one by one.

I know that a siege costs an additional movement point, does a battle cost an additional movement point?

A) ALL battles cost an MP to launch.

The Turks enter a Russian-occupied province (1 MP) and attack the Russian army there (2 MP). If the Russians successfully avoid the combat, do the Turks get their MP back? A) No

Do they have to lay siege to the garrison before taking control of the province? A) Yes.

Does that cost yet another MP (3 in this example?)

A) No, the MP cost to attack a garrison, or attack a field army is only paid once, regardless of outcome.

Can an army avoid a battle and retreat when an enemy enters an area if there are no adjacent friendly areas?

A) Yes as explained in 5.591.

If an army succeeds in leaving a province when an enemy army enters, does the retreating army take or leave its garrison?

A) Leaves it.

If an army retreats or is defeated in a

battle, do they take their garrison?

A) Yes.

5.514. Is there a straits crossing between Denmark and Copenhagen?

A) Yes.

It seems strange that armies cannot cross if a corps is on the other side while navies have no effect. Hence Copenhagen with a corps within is unassailable by any means. A) True.

Can a corps cross a "crossing arrow" if the enemy fleets are in sole possession of the sea zone in which the arrow resides? A) Yes.

HOUSE RULE: The Constantinople Sea zone should count as Ottoman territory; e.g., Russians (or anyone else) must declare war on (or ally with) or gain free passage from the Ottomans if they want to move into or through it.

5.53. If I capture a province but have only cavalry and artillery left, how do I garrison the area?

A) You can't.

5.54 Land Battle Set-up, states "If [no commanders] are available, then the generic general for that nationality takes command." I assume this should be ignored. A) Correct.

I understand that the deployment of divisions is done in secret before a battle commences. However, I wasn't sure if only the forces in the current battle sector are revealed or whether the entire field is revealed all at once. Also, when are the positions revealed?—Before or after the attacker selects his offensive option?

A) All positions are revealed immediately after both players announce that their deployment is complete.

The defender gains one ghost division for every garrison point in an intrinsic garrison. When losses are taken, how are these ghost divisions affected, i.e. after the battle, is the intrinsic garrison

value reduced if losses were taken from these ghost divisions?

A) If the province did not change hands, the garrison remains intact at its printed strength.

5.561. The attacker must have at least one unit in a sector to conduct any kind of offensive from that sector.

If he selects the Demonstration Option, does the attacker automatically retain initiative after both rounds, or simply the Demonstration round?

A) Simply the demonstration round.

NOTE: You cannot launch a flank attack against the center sector.

Are the attacker's combat options public knowledge, i.e., does the defender know what they are before he chooses his own?

A) No.

5.571 Step 4. If two allied armies are in a battle, which officer's Tactical Number is used? Example: If 6 corps of Russians (with or without a leader) are stacked with 1 British Corps and Wellington, is Wellington the commander?

A) Any leader present can potentially command. Players first discuss and decide which player will run the battle. His country's leader will command throughout the battle.

A corps of 2 divisions attacks a corps of 1 division + 1 garrison. Whoever wins initiative wins the battle automatically right? A) Right.

A corps of 1 division attacks a corps of 2 divisions and 1 garrison. If the attacker wins the initiative, could he win the battle by inflicting a loss on any of the front enemy positions even though he may have no troops left?

A) You must have troops left to win.

Step 9. Once an army is defeated it must leave the battlemat (withdraw) and proceed to determine its Pursuit losses.

5.58. In combat when do you determine

who has the initiative for purposes of determining victory? For example: If I bust the the French center, but receive a "D" result (losing the initiative) is the battle over because I have the initiative at the instant when his center is empty?
A) No. You must retain or gain the initiative when an enemy sector is void.

Does the void sector have to have enemy troops in the opposite enemy sector for it to cause the defeat when losing initiative?
A) No.

Does an army have to retreat before an army that no longer exists? A) No.

If two allied armies are victorious in battle, do both countries get the victory points? Are they split?
A) The points must be split as evenly as possible between all participating armies. Any remainder is distributed at commander's discretion.

Does the controlling player gain victory points for winning battles with his NPC allies? His NPC controlled countries? A) No.

5.59. Are the Routed units returned to the player mats prior to pursuit or after pursuit. I assume prior. A) Yes, prior to pursuit.

Do routed cavalry count in pursuit for either side? A) No.

6.0 On the first turn, do the players get a turn to build BEFORE they get their winter income?
A) Yes, during the fall Mutual Production Phase.

6.1 Can the British have a bunch of "corps-less" infantry divisions in London, waiting around, and on a given turn, disband a few corps across the map and assign the now freed up corps markers to the unemployed divisions in London? A) No.

Can the British raise troops in Gibraltar, i.e., is it "Home Territory"? A) No.

7.1 National Victory Objectives

France	450 VPs
Great Britain	330 VPs
Russia	320 VPs
Austria	300 VPs
Prussia	220 VPs
Spain	175 VPs
Ottoman Empire	175 VPs

CARDS: There are no offensive option cards (don't need 'em). Editorial mix-up there.

JOSEPH IN SPAIN: On Table #2, ignore the statement "France can never again ally with Spain."

If Spain is completely conquered by France and Joseph is on the Throne, what happens to Spanish fleets that have no port? Can they use an ally's?
A) Yes, they can use an ally's port. If they have no allies and no port and they can't blockade an enemy, they are eliminated.

TABLES: When the chart says "may use the tactical modifier," does that mean that it does not have to use the modifier? A) Yes.

Are Static Defense and Fixed Defense are the same? A) Yes.

Operational Edge (result 14-15 on Approach to Battle Table). You can attack two armies (presumably allied?) separately. Do you split your forces to do this?
A) No—attack one with everything and if successful attack the second with what is left.

Do you roll again for extra forces since there are now two battles? A) No.

The Events Table never refers to whether the player rolling is the only effected result. For example, if Russia rolls during the event phase and has a result that applies to another country, lets say Austrian peace party, does this apply or is it ignored?
A) The events take place, regardless of whom they affect. If Russia rolls the Austrian Peace Party, it's "Sorry about that Austria, honest, I didn't attempt to sway your government in any way... Honest!"

Event Table #1:
(Change) Modifiers to the die roll:
Prussia -1, Spain -2, Ottoman Empire -3.

Table #1: Placing New Commanders
They must be placed with a corps with a LOC.

When Wellington appears in 1807, must he appear in London or may he appear in Egypt or Sweden, for example?
A) Welly must be placed in London and moved overseas via transport or fleet (Leaders don't count against a fleet's transport costs).

I assume that NPC's can not ever get other leaders since they never roll on the political events table, is that assumption correct?

A) No. All leaders go in the cup—do not put back a leader of another nation. He goes into play, serving of course his native country. Whatever leader is drawn is given to his player and is activated.
Table#4: Result 4-5 needs clarification—"rolled" what? Do you mean each PC on the French side THE MAP. Can a corps move directly from East Prussia to Lithuania? A) Yes.

APPRECIATION. We'd like to thank everyone who wrote in with questions and constructive criticism, all those who helped us find the answers, and especially those who have given La Guerre the highest endorsement, by playing and enjoying it:
Alan Emrich, Terry Rooker, Robert M. Titran, Jarek Andruszkiewicz, Dave Schubert, Andy Joy, Christopher A. Owens, Marcus Kaessbohrer, Frank Hakstege, Dan Raspler, Christopher Moeller, Vesa Saarinen, Petri Vuolteenaho, Alan Moorhouse, Mark Bailey, Paul Dallas, Søren Fisker, Ed Wimble, Robert Haden, Roger Hollenbaugh, William Eaton, Rich Sutton, Alfred Wallace, Guillaume Daudin, Scott Slingsby, Steve van der Waal, Phil C. Fry, Jayson Gralewicz, Daniel Duldig, Laurent Siquet, Howard Swanson, Chris Janiec, Peter Landry.

Ch Fireside Chat

OSG's First year back

Kevin Zucker

*Excerpts of Interview conducted at
One World Cafe in South Baltimore,
22 September, 1998, 7pm*

For the full text, go to
www.Consimworld.com

One strength point equals one thousand men.

When I went to do "Napoleon at Bay," I still had a problem. A traditional wargame of that era could not model the 1814 campaign because you had the French outnumbered two-and-a-half to one over the entire front. Regular wargames arbitrarily assign huge strength factors to the French. Well, there were good designers of the era who were not above doing that stuff. But I said, "I'm not going to do that. In fact, I'm going to make every strength point worth a thousand men." You can quibble with me about that. Maybe the guard should be worth more, maybe you think I should build the guards excellence into their combat strength. Maybe so, but I'm going to use other methods to show why the French were able to do as

well as they were rather than just simply arbitrarily assigning them whatever number combat strength they need to win the game; which is too easy. And that sometimes was the modus operandi ... "we seem to be having a balance problem with the game. Well, try taking a strength point off the Prussian units and try it again." What is that telling you? You're not learning anything. So I said, "I'm using one strength point for every thousand guys for all the armies, for all the troops."

Mass x velocity = impact

Napoleon understood how to use that space in-between the nutcracker. He liked to be in between the pincers. Because he could take a weaker army and get twice as much mileage out of it. He had a formula: mass times velocity equals impact. Its taken from Newtonian physics, but he applied it in using the strength of his forces. So, if his army could move twice as fast as the other guys, and be in twice as many fights over a given period of time, then they could do twice as much damage.

If you know nothing about how to retreat, you cannot win.

My kind of creativity is to take ideas from different sources and put them together and see what happens. The other thing about my designs that turn off some people, besides the fact that you can't move all your pieces every turn, is the fact that if you play very aggressively, as a normal wargame player might play, you lose. In the traditional wargame, both sides are trying to attack, whoever attacks better wins. My games you have to be able to retreat. If you know nothing about how to retreat, you cannot win in my games. Aggressive play will be defeated by the game system.

The screening and information gathering that Napoleonic cavalry were used for.

In "1806" it took me years to evolve a system to show one of the functions of cavalry. One of the problems I had with wargames up to that point was

there was no differentiation between the use of your units except that cavalry moved faster. Basically they were just faster infantry maybe a little bit weaker. So I wanted to find some rules to show the screening and information gathering ability of cavalry in the Napoleonic era, that's what light cavalry were used for. To go out and find out who was out there, where they were, what their strength was, and then at the same time deny information to the enemy about what you have. It took years to develop that system of vedette rules.

Living on Air

One thing I thought would be nice was to bring some new people into the hobby. I saw this as a hobby that has no connection to the mainstream society. So what we needed to do was to have something that would branch over to pull some nourishing new blood out into the little branch tips that we are existing in out here. We're like living on air. The only new people coming into the hobby are Europeans. The European market is growing, the American market is shrinking, and it's the same group of guys. The only new gamers we get in America are lapsed gamers that are coming back into the hobby. So I wanted to do a game that would have a potential sales of something on another order of magnitude than Napoleon at Bay and 1806.

What is Accuracy

Accuracy means different things to different people. For some people, accuracy means you play the game and you get the same damn result that came out historically. So that it becomes like clockwork. To me,

accuracy is, "what were the strictures, what were the limitations on the players, and within those, what were the choices that they had that they didn't realize?" Some people didn't like the "Emperor Returns," the only Waterloo game to allow the French the possibility of driving on Ghent instead of Brussels. Some people didn't like that because it's not historical; yet it is perfectly historical. The French could have attacked Ghent; there was no reason why not. They had a good reason to do that, to interpose themselves between the British army and its line of communication towards the coast. Different people mean different things when they say a game is inaccurate. You have to be careful about that! To some people, accuracy means the units are labeled with their correct historical designations.

When somebody asks me a question I haven't thought about before

The way I design games, I don't want to ever start making arbitrary decisions in order to "make the game work." I want to have my basic parameters, time and distance, and geographical features correct, so that I don't have to monkey with rules to make the game work. That way, when somebody asks me a question about a rule and I haven't thought about that before, I can explore that question by looking for historical precedent for that situation and I can say, 'It should work that way.' So when I answer a game question as well as when I'm designing a game, I base it on my understanding of how things would have turned out.

La Guerre de l'Empereur

The game has tremendous depth. If you read the rules, you don't necessarily see what depth there is. You have to play the game many times to plumb the depths that are indicated and sketched out in those rules. I have a lot of faith in the product, and after answering game questions ... I've published ALL the game questions that I've gotten (except for really obvious ones that are clearly answered in the rules). I've published them all, and there were only three changes that I wanted to make. For the rest of them, the answers were pretty much indicated, if not directly stated, so that you could infer from the rules what the correct answer was.

I wanted it to be about the Napoleonic Wars

The idea was, we knew we wanted it to be a one-evening game, something that novices would play and also something that grognards would find admirable content, that it actually had something to say. I don't want to do a game that's just so abstract that it could be anything. I wanted it to be about the Napoleonic wars. And I think it is. This game does show, especially for people who have been spending all their time doing Napoleonic battles or operations, it does show something about the overarching conflict that everybody was involved in.

The Last Days of the Grande Armée

Comments by Kevin Zucker—extracts of interview of 22 October 1998. (For full text of the interview go to www.Consimworld.com)

Last Days of the Grande Armée is really the 1806 design, 6 Days of Glory design, and I have simplified it in its basic version even from 1806, although we will provide Vedettes and Hidden movement as options in this game, so if you use all the available options, it will be a game that will be very, similar to 1806. There are rules on Leaders, Reorganization, Command, Initiative, March Orders, Road March, Repulse, and Pontoon Bridges.

I have taken a new approach to Initiative and Command. I've sort of combined the two ideas of Movement Commands and Initiative into one short little rule, called 'Initiative.' But it combines concepts, in order to get away from the all-or-nothing nature of Initiative in the *Napoleon at Bay* series. In the battle scenarios in those games—where you don't have Administrative Points and you don't have to buy Movement Commands—you have an assigned number of Movement Commands every turn. Well, in *Last Days of the Grande Armée* you have an assigned number of Movement Points, which is determined by a chit draw. A chit will have, for instance, the numbers "4/6" which means your infantry, when you draw that chit, all of them, are going to move up to four, and your cavalry are going to move up to six Movement Points. You start out with a



couple of chits in your hand, and each turn you have to draw a chit from the cup, and play that. Then if you want to 'Force March,' you can play a chit from your hand. But you can Force March only every-other turn.

The French Army had some problems with traffic jams at the outset of the campaign, simply because of the limited number of routes north leading to just a few bridges. The Army's new chief of staff, Marshal Soult, wasn't up to the challenges this operation posed, and some formations were delayed. One cannot tell whether these delays might have made the difference in the battles on the 16th. The French Player will have to cope with these delays. To make matters worse, the French Player may not draw the regular Chit on the First Turn, (Morning of June 15th) but may only Force March. The perfect solution to the starting French deployment has yet to be uncovered in playtesting!

An Optional Rule on Exhaustion (Attack Effectiveness) shows the ability of some elite units to continue attacking turn after turn, while others could sustain only one attack per day.

(The Exhaustion Rating is the middle value on the unit counters.) After resolving combat, attacking players must cross-reference the unit quality with the odds and then roll the die. For Example, a unit with a quality of "2" attacking at 1-2 odds must roll a "five" or less to be able to attack again that day. If it attacks at 2-1, it must roll a "four" or less; at 4-1, "three", at 6-1 "two" or less.

There are three Scenarios—Ligny/Quatre Bras (6 Turns), Waterloo (3 Turns), and the full campaign (18 Turns).

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Components: one 22" x 34" map, 280 counters, 24 pages of rules. Traces the all-important campaigns of Arcola, Bassano, Castiglione, and Rivoli (four scenarios). An expansion set will appear at a later date with two additional maps and four more scenarios. Estimated Retail \$42.

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HIGHWAY TO THE KREMLIN

Components: Two 22 x 34" maps, 560 counters, 24 pages of rules. This will be an area-movement game of the whole campaign in two-day turns, June—December 1812. Be assured that these areas will not be arbitrarily drawn, however—we translated the areas from a regular hexgrid terrain analysis, basing the boundaries on the actual performance of an infantry force making a normal march. Administrative Points, Organization

Displays and Attrition make the system similar to *Napoleon at Bay*. (We are also considering extending this treatment to a new edition of *Struggle of Nations*).

Estimated Retail \$48.

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THE SUN OF AUSTERLITZ

Components: One 22 x 34" map, 280 counters, 20 pages of rules. November—December 1805. This map will cover the territory from Znaim and Brünn to Olmütz and Ostrava, at the regular 2 miles to the hex. And it will mate with the "1809" map (Victory Games), allowing for a precession to the campaign.

Estimated Retail \$36.

Pre-Advanced offer \$27—25%-off now.

FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR— THE SECOND PHASE

Components: Two 22 x 34" maps, 560 counters, 24 pages of rules. A very interesting phase of the war south of Paris, around Orleans. We have good source material on this phase, which has never been covered in a game before. These maps will be at the same scale as *Napoleon at Bay*, and will link up with them, allowing for the possibility of a grand 4-map coverage of the siege of Paris as well.

Estimated Retail \$48.

Pre-Advanced offer \$36—25%-off now.

THE WAR OF 1812—MARYLAND

Components: One 22 x 34" map, 280 counters, 16 pages of rules. There is a lot of interest in the local campaigns of 1812 in Maryland, and there are quite a few experts whose knowledge we can tap for this project. Of course, we are also close enough to visit the battlefields for some first-hand research. Estimated Retail \$36.

Pre-Advanced offer \$27—25%-off now.

GAMES IN THE NAPOLEON AT LEIPZIG SERIES MARENGO—THE PLAIN OF SCRIVIA

Components: One 22 x 34" map, 280 counters, 16 pages of rules. The great victory of Napoleon over Melas in 1800 which sealed French control of Northern Italy until Eugene's campaigns of 1809.

Estimated Retail \$36.

Pre-Advanced offer \$27—25%-off now.

SMOLENSK —

ON THE ROAD TO BORODINO

Components: One 22 x 34" map, 280 counters, 16 pages of rules. Here the Russians showed they could give as good as they got, and withdrew without a pursuit. They took a toll on the French and not only preserved their army, but were still strong enough to contest the road ahead.

Estimated Retail \$36.

Pre-Advanced offer \$27—25%-off now.

GAMES IN THE 1806 SERIES

ABENSBURG/ECKMÜHL/REGENSBURG

Components: Two 22 x 34" maps, 280 counters, 20 pages of rules. This campaign has plenty of opportunity for the offensive for both players—the Austrians at first have a shot at Davout's III Corps, which has to withdraw along the Danube. Later, Napoleon arrives with his army and can attempt to outflank the Austrians via Landshut.

Estimated Retail \$48.

Pre-Advanced offer \$36—25%-off now.

GAMES OF WORLD WAR II

DARK DECEMBER II—D. PARKER

Components: Two 22 x 34" maps (19mm hexes) and 400 counters. Regimental units with recon battalions for the Germans and separate bns for all the smaller independent units on both sides. Artillery corps and groups for the Allies. Divisional HQ units which include the large calibre artillery for each division, anti-tank, engineer and bridge building assets as well as the trace source to supply. Divisional commander's names on the division—no complicated leader rules, though. Normal movement except that stacking costs all units full MPs. Result: no traffic jam rules needed. Unique movement/combat sequence: Movement has two move-fight impulses, but with a couple of twists. Each division would be able to designate:

1) One reserve unit which could move-fight and move-fight again starting in the second impulse! (so it moves a third impulse)

2) A single "spearhead" unit is doubled in both attack and defense for that turn if within range of its divisional commander.

Estimated Retail \$48.

Pre-Advanced offer \$36—25%-off now.

PACIFIC FLEET—STEVE CAREY

Components: One 22 x 34" map (area movement) and 400 counters. See the "Work in Progress" Section for a full description! Estimated Retail \$36.

Pre-Advanced offer \$27—25%-off now.

La Guerre de l'Empereur

The Emperor's War, 1805-1815

The full text of the following can be found on the Consimworld Discussion Board, under Game Company Support Forum—Operational Studies Group, message 279, dated 17 September 1998.

One Man's Ceiling is Another Man's Floor

There are days when you begin to wish the World Wide Web had never been invented. After reading the comments of our critic some fans of the game registered surprise that we bothered to respond at all. The critic didn't really describe the game as published, and promulgated several misconceptions as to what is actually in the game, what the game is and is not. To clarify the contents and design goals of this project, we posted the following message.

We have to design games for everyone—not just for the most hard-to-please critic. We would, indeed, like to widen the base of a shrinking market. We have tried to make the game accessible to non-wargamers, and for this we have been criticized. The critic's sense of disappointment stems more from a basic misunderstanding of our approach than from any particulars.

However, it is still very important to address these particulars now that they have been posted on the web. He cited six areas where he felt the design failed:

- 1) "lack of political rules"
- 2) "no manpower shortages"
- 3) "tedious combat"
- 4) "no differentiation among troops"
- 5) "the supply rules"
- 6) "no way to simulate Trafalgar"

Were all these things true and fairly spoken, I would not be able to give the game my fullest endorsement. Fortunately, I think we can rather easily show that these statements are completely erroneous, based either upon a misunderstanding of the rules, or, more likely, by a failure to read the rules at all. Once in a blue moon we receive game questions from someone who has not actually read the rules, but who nonetheless insists he knows what is in them.

1) No Political Rules? The critic's ignorance of the rules is nowhere better demonstrated than in his repeated assertion that the game has "no" political rules.

The political rules are, as they ought to be, the heart and soul of *La Guerre*. They are founded on a distinct political model of Napoleonic Europe. For those who are interested, here is a brief synopsis of the Political rules our critic missed:

During the Winterphase players take stock of their Economies and then, in the Diplomacy Phase, non-Allied players may hold private talks. Following this is the NPC Alliance Phase, when players may ally with Non-Player Countries.

In addition, "open" discussions between non-Allied Players take place at the beginning of each Combat Season (Spring/Summer/Fall), while Allied nations can plan their strategy in secret. Each combat season begins with declarations of military cooperation (if any), meaning that the players have decided to combine their forces, an essential part of Coalition strategy.

Many political events are allowed by the Events Tables, such as: Trade Agreements, the Peace Party in the various countries comes to power, War with America, and Rebellions in various provinces.

The most important Political events are those initiated by the Players themselves. During the Player Turn, before any Naval or Land Force may move, the Player may offer a Negotiated Peace, offer to Surrender, offer Alliances (which grant to the allies the mutual ability to move through each other's provinces, etc.) trade provinces, and Declare War, all of which is subject to "cancellation," representing the efforts of spies, rumors, and the general tendency of political events to spin out of control. These Political Rules, taken together, represent 5 pages out of 16. They succeed in modelling the significant elements of diplomacy in the Napoleonic era, and they do so clearly and effectively.

2) Is it true to say you can lose 400,000 men in a battle and then instantly rebuild them? Each infantry division represents approximately 8,000 men, and cavalry approximately 2,500 men. France, the greatest land power, begins the game with eleven corps, comprising 21 infantry and 8 cavalry divisions, plus 4 artillery "grand batteries," or 188,000 men in all. In fact, since France can field only 18 corps, she could not have more than 307,000 men in the field at any one time. Were France to lose her entire army in one turn, the results would certainly be catastrophic for the French Player, and not at all easily remedied.

Production of units is based upon the Economic Value of provinces controlled by a player. Many provinces in Russia, for example, have a value of 2, while Paris, the richest province, is valued at 17.

Is it true that you only need two artillery units? If so, that would be about right for a Napoleonic era grand battery (144 guns).

3) Does combat take too long? The combat system is also one of the great strengths of the game. I'd draw a comparison to Columbia Games' battle systems. It takes roughly the same (or less) time to complete a large battle in LGE. Our combat system works, and is exciting.

Combat is resolved in several "rounds." This is based upon the fact that it took time to organize any kind of offensive on the battlefield, and there were relative lulls in between, punctuated by the rattle of small

arms and artillery fire. A player must gain the initiative to execute an offensive option. A player can choose to launch a Probe, Assault, Echelon, Combined Arms, Grand Assault, Flank Attack, Demonstration, or Cavalry Charge, depending upon the quality of his commander. The defender must choose to deploy in Skirmish Line, Line, Refuse Flanks, Counter Attack, Squares Formed, Reserve Slopes, Static Defense, or Cavalry Counter Charge, again depending upon the quality of his leader. Some of these options are very difficult to obtain for poor leaders; Napoleon and Wellington have the widest latitude in their options.

Battle options are selected in secret and then cross-referenced to determine the outcome of that round, including any change in initiative. Initiative tends to swing from one player to the other; a player who can retain the initiative can gain control of the battle. Losses in combat are specified for both sides, including mandatory cavalry losses if any, both in routed and permanently destroyed units. Though combat options are influenced by a die roll, the actual combat losses are strictly based upon the intersection of the players' chosen combat options.

Divisions are deployed on each player's battle map, in left, center, right and reserve. Once a given sector is devoid of troops and the enemy player has the initiative, the battle is lost. There are rules for deploying troops from other sectors, reinforcements from other provinces, rally of previously routed units, and bombardments. If Night intervenes, a player can leave the battle board without suffering pursuit, often disastrous for an army lacking cavalry.

4) Should there be troop quality? We think the differentiation of troop quality would be inappropriate to our design goals. This game doesn't zoom in that close.

5) Is it possible to "wait till the other side moves, then attack out of supply?" *La Guerre de l'Empereur* doesn't have supply rules. If you are interested in supply in the Napoleonic Wars, OSG has a game for you.

6) Can the game model Trafalgar? Certainly—it's devastating impact on Napoleon's invasion plans is clear. Collingwood's squadron consisted of 15 ships and Nelson's of 12. Villeneuve had 33 ships—15 of them Spanish—and he lost 20. A squadron represents 64 ships (including all kinds of ships, not just ships of the line). So, of two squadrons engaged on either side, one French squadron was captured.

Are the figures on the units "amateurish?" We went to great lengths to depict the uniforms accurately for each nation and minor state. The counters in *La Guerre* can be used as a quick reference on the basic uniforms of the Napoleonic Wars.

Our critic continues to throw around dollar amounts that he thinks we should be making on this game. I'd better put him in charge of Financial Planning for OSG. I must be missing something. But I like someone who can dream that big.

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1806

Rosbach Avenged

From the "MOVES" review
by Colonel Wilbur Gray

Slipping into a game of 1806 is as comfortable as putting on your favorite house slippers as a prelude to a relaxing Sunday afternoon. The game is essentially a modification of the previously published COA game, *Six Days of Glory*, itself a direct descendent of Kevin Zucker's *Napoleon at Bay* series of Napoleonic campaign games. Because of this, old hands will find it exceedingly easy to break open the box and begin shoving divisions around, while the base system remains so relatively simple that newcomers to the hobby will also be pleased.

Typographical errors were also few and the game was easily learned in half an hour, a tribute to the rules' overall simplicity. Yet while the game was simple, the rules themselves contain a host of subtleties that become important in game play.

The Prussians found themselves continually struggling with command and leadership problems far more often than the French, a situation that made it very difficult to respond to Napoleon's intentions, though dead-on the money historically. It is a tribute to the game's author that all of this manifests itself due to a C2 system that is relatively easy to learn but yet so subtly decisive when executed improperly. Kevin Zucker has done a particularly fine job in this regard.

The rules on Vedettes allow cavalry formations, or the mounted component of Prussian light divisions (usually five squadrons of Hussars—very nice touch here), to break down into regimental-sized formations for use as a reconnaissance or counter-reconnaissance force. These Vedette counters confer most of the advantages of regular cavalry units, including a Combined Arms combat bonus or the ability to retreat prior to combat. When combined with hidden movement, however, these tiny formations can really keep an opponent in the dark about who has what where, and this is particularly so for the Prussians

who hit the field with the ability to deploy 28 Vedette counters to the French 20.

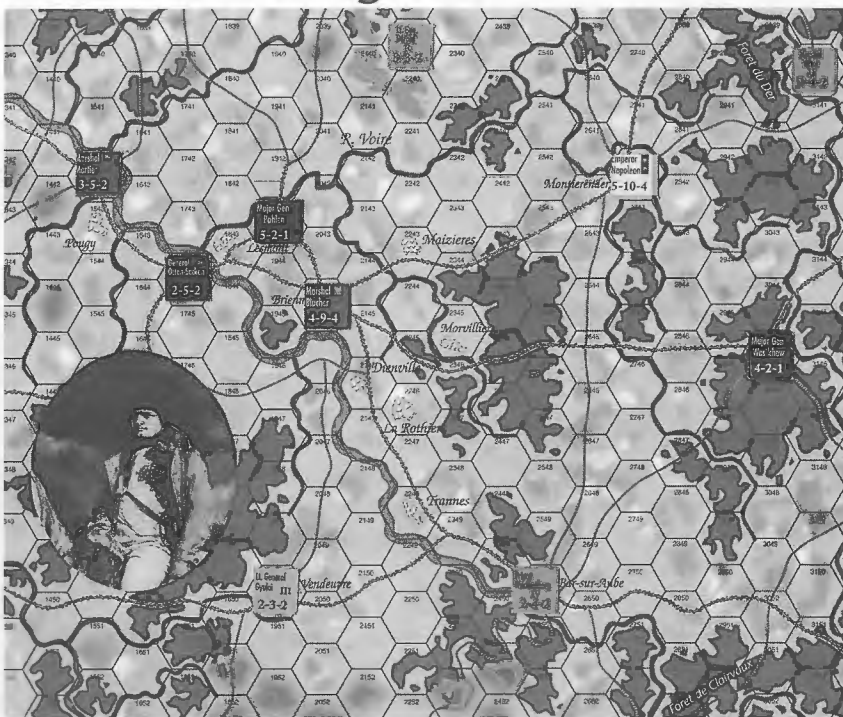
Purely objective design? Hardly. But complete objectivity often makes for a boring game and that is not a charge that will ever be leveled at this fine effort. Overall, I found the game easy to learn, fun to play and not as unbalanced as one might think, though it will certainly show the players why it was tough to be the Prussians. I discovered only a few places where minor improvements would be nice, such as putting the Table of Contents on the first page as opposed to in the center of the Rule Book. Otherwise, I found the game to be excellent and I especially appreciated the slightly different approach it took *vis-a-vis* COA's *Jena* game as regards the core cause of Berlin's defeat.

And so how does *1806* compare to *Jena*? In general I found the COA product to be a little more detailed in terms of tactical flavor, Zucker's game getting the nod in terms of ease of play. Both do a commendable job of showing why the mighty Prussians went down to defeat in this campaign.

Napoleon at Bay

Everything is new in this edition . . .

Rules: Since the first edition of *Napoleon at Bay*, the Rules to the Campaigns of *Napoleon* series have evolved through five separate campaign games: *Bonaparte in Italy*, *Struggle of Nations*, *1809*, *The Emperor Returns* and *1807: The Eagles Turn East*. Now the results of years of developments are returned to the original. Rules on Pitched Battle allow for multiple attacks & counterattacks in a single turn. "Dummies" have become smart "Vedettes" which can perform cavalry's true scouting & screening functions. Completely revised text contains hundreds of improvements large & small. Optional rules on Rear Guards, Reserves, and Attack Effectiveness grew out of the discussion in *Wargame Design Magazine*. These new elements make this well-loved game a good bit more comprehensive.



Work in Progress

La Guerre de l'Empereur

We have a set of Advanced Rules for *La Guerre* under development. These rules are intended to add color, historical flavor, or to speed play. We are awaiting the results of playtesting before making these rules official. If you would like to see the current version, write us or send an email. The rules include:

- 2.52 Alternate Historical Set-up
- 4.213 British Overseas Economy
- 4.214 The Continental Blockade
- 4.215 Effect of Loss of Capital on Tax Collection
- 4.6 Alternate Turn Start Phase.
- 4.731 Poland (Grand Duchy of Warsaw)
- 5.125 Surrender Terms Increased
- 5.128 Optional Freely Negotiated Surrender
- 5.561. Offensive Option Explanations
- 5.59 Pursuit Step
- 5.54 Overrun
- 6.1 Increase in Cost to Build Troops Guerrillas, and ...

SPIES (Advanced Option)

Here is the complete text of the Spies rule (vers. 0.5) It is very likely to be simplified ... Each PC has a number of "Agents." Agents enter the game according to the rules for new Leaders. To enter an Agent into Play, the Player expends six Gold during his Land Phase and places him on the map. EXCEPTION: Russian Agents cost 10 Gold to enter.

Once placed on the map, Agents have 5 Action Points to expend each Land Phase. An Agent may move to any other location which is either occupied by troops of the same nationality or its allies, or any unoccupied minor country province, provided the Agent can trace a "LOC" to the desired province which does not cross (a) home provinces of nations at war with the PC or (b) provinces occupied by troops at war with the Player to whom the Agent belongs. Each province moved into costs one-half Action Point (round fractions up).

Infiltration

An Agent may attempt to infiltrate into (a) or (b). To do this he rolls one d10 and checks the result. Infiltration requires no Action Points beyond the normal cost of movement.

Infiltration Results

- 1-3 Agent Turned Back (removed from map, but may re-enter play as above)
- 4-10 Agent Infiltrates (Enters province; control retained by owner)

Infiltration Modifiers:

Infiltrating into (a), add one (+1) if any friendly agents are already there.
Infiltrating into (b), add four (+4).
French, Austrian and British Agents: add one (+1) to die roll.

After the Infiltration die roll, the Agent's movement is ended for that turn. On subsequent turns the Agent may continue to move and freely depart (a) or (b); or move freely anywhere within (a). If he infiltrates (b) and the Enemy Army subsequently moves out of the province, the spy may attempt to take a free ride with the enemy Army but must roll a successful infiltration result to do so.

Travel by sea

Agents may travel by sea from any port to any other port within range. (*This journey takes place during the Land Phase.*) Agents are considered to travel via regular passenger vessels available in every port. To hire such a vessel costs one Action Point. The Agent must begin the sea journey in a port and arrive during the same Land Phase in a destination port. Each sea area traversed costs one Action Point. Enemy fleets at sea are ignored. Agents may not land at ports blockaded by enemy fleets, or at ports containing Enemy fleets. Upon arrival in the destination port the Agent may attempt to infiltrate.

INFORMATION AGENTS CAN DISCOVER

Agents can discover any information that is confidential, if they are present in the right province. They can reveal this information to the Player who controls the Agent or his Ally.

Present at Enemy Army HQ
If an Agent is present at Enemy Army HQ (having infiltrated into a province containing an enemy army that then becomes

involved in combat), an Agent can find out the strength of the enemy army and/or the two defender battle type cards selected by the enemy player—in any one round of battle only—prior to selecting his offensive option; or the deployment of the enemy army may be revealed before the player who controls the Agent (or his Ally) deploys. Also, in the same circumstances, the Agent can reveal the combat options available to the enemy player.

Present in PC Capital

If present in the capital of a PC, an Agent can find out the value of the Player's treasury, the distribution of units on the player mat, or even the secret terms and conditions of any alliance entered into by that Player with one other specified Player.

Resolving Discovery Attempts

Each discovery attempt costs a certain number of Action Points. Each attempt may also cost some Gold. Finally, each attempt requires a roll of one d10 and is successful if the result lies within the range specified for that Discovery type. (*The Action Points and Gold must be expended regardless of success or failure.*)

All discovery is resolved during the Friendly Land Phase. EXCEPTION: Discovery during battle may occur regardless of whose Player-Turn is in progress. The Action Points for such discovery are deducted from the 5 Points available to the Agent during his following Land Phase

DISCOVERY TABLE

Discovery Type Die Roll	Cost in Gold Action Pts.
Value of Player's Treasury	0G
5 6 7 8 9 0	1
Forces on Player Mat	1G
6 7 8 9 0	1
Secret Alliance Terms	1G
8 9 0	2
Strength of Enemy Army	0G
6 7 8 9 0	2
Enemy Combat Options	0G
6 7 8 9 0	2
Battle Type Cards Selected	2G
8 9 0	4
Enemy Army Deployment	4G
0	5

Die Roll Modifier:

French, Austrian and British Agents add one (+1).

On a roll of 1 or 2 on the Discovery Table the Agent is Doubled (flips over to enemy control); on a 3 he is Turned Back (removed from play—may return in a following turn at a cost of 6 Gold).

Double Agents

An Agent who becomes doubled switches allegiance. Control of the doubled Agent is transferred to the Player whose Home Country or Army HQ the Agent occupied or attempted to infiltrate.

Multiple Cancel Declaration Attempts

If an Agent is present in either capital of the nations involved, the owning player may attempt a second cancel declaration attempt at a cost of only 2G (provided the player first made an unsuccessful attempt at the regular cost). A roll of 10-29 on the cancel declaration table results in the Agent being doubled; on a 30-39 he is Turned Back.

Pacific Fleet

The first informal playtest was held with Ed Green and Ken Miller leading the Japanese, while Steve Carey helmed the USA. We only played the first 3 months of the war (Turn 1), but much tabletalk and feedback proved valuable. The game starts immediately after Pearl Harbor. Here's a brief summary:

Japan opts to leave her Carrier Strike Force in the North Pacific to hunt for randomly deployed USA carriers. Imperial forces are disappointed when no enemy flattops turn up.

Imperial forces move on the undefended Solomons, with only an Allied submarine in their path. Unfortunately, Allied search fails to find the Japanese units (normally, the Transports would always be located, but not on the first turn due to "surprise"). Imperial forces land ground troops and an engineer (for a base next turn) unopposed at Guadalcanal. Large Japanese Air Groups stage raids in Malaya/Sumatra, damaging the British heavies Prince of Wales and the Repulse.

Further Nippon air raids over Singapore and adjacent areas failed to knock out Allied air forces. A lurking IJN sub however does send the already damaged Repulse to the ocean bottom.

Large battle in the Phillipines. With light IJN carriers providing cover, the entire Allied air strength in Manila is decimated. Bold Imperial admirals run the guns at Corregidor to bombard Manila, but two IJN battlecruisers and a light task force are damaged in return by the mighty shore batteries. Large amounts of Japanese troops swarm upon the Phillipine mainland, and the defending Allied Colonial troops suffer heavy casualties, but hold their ground. Light IJN forces move in and easily overwhelm the Borneo/Celebes area, with both bases quickly captured.

The turn ends with the USA still holding Wake Island (Japan made no effort there), but Japan threatening to build a base at Guadalcanal. Allied forces have been softened in the Phillipines and Malaya/Sumatra. Britain sent some surface forces to reinforce Singapore, but with the Prince of Wales damaged, and the Repulse sunk, things look gloomy for the Allies in that region. Japan has extended the tentacles of her empire, and is ready to assault the East Indies and perhaps move closer to cutting off Australia. But the USA has 4 intact carriers, plus the Hornet as a reinforcement, and has some plans of his own....

Overall, I was pleased with this mini-session. Many areas are in need of refinement, and A LOT of work remains ahead. Rules consolidation and further abstraction will be required to avoid a micro-management problem. In all honesty, the New Years deadline I foolishly set is going to have to be pushed back a month at least. I will continue to keep you apprised of progress or setbacks (hopefully few) that occur. —Steve Carey

Napoleon's Eagles

The game has the following components:

152 cards
1 rule book (12pp)
1 set up card
1 reference card
Beginner's Game/Tactics
(2pp; could be added to the rule book)

Alan's suggestion is that, rather than having players provide their own generic decks of cards, we print up cards that are specific to the game. This would mean an additional 112 Cards.

For a variety of reasons, I'm thinking that the 1815 campaign is not the one we should begin with (although the component list above represents a good "working" list). We haven't talked much about marketing approaches for NE, particularly the concept of expansion sets, but I believe it's an important factor in how we decide to package the game.

Whether or not we want to commit to expansion sets at this stage, the first game should probably feature the French and ONE major opponent (either Austria, Russia or Prussia), rather than the polyglot forces involved in the 1815 battles. Expansions could then add in the other major opponents. For example, if the initial game featured France and Austria, it would include battles from 1809, 1805 (minus Austerlitz), assorted smaller engagements from 1813-15, and the Italian Campaigns. The first expansion set, featuring the Russians, might follow, including Austerlitz, the 1812 campaign, and assorted battles from 1807-14 (which included Russian and Austrian contingents).

We'd have to look into the cost benefits... but if expansions seem like a good idea, it might be smart to hold the initial game back until I've painted enough cards to permit the simultaneous printing of the initial game PLUS the first expansion set. We could then release the initial game, wait a few months, and release the first expansion.

—Christopher Moeller

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