Napoleon at Bay Expansion Kit
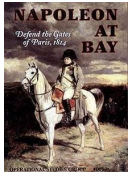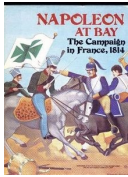
Dave Demko and Kevin Zucker

How to use the NABXK with different editions

First edition
Napoleon at Bay: The Campaign in France, 1814. **TSG,** 1978. ziplock
Napoleon at Bay: The Campaign in France, 1814. **OSG,** 1979. boxed, hussar cover

NOTE: Players with only the first edition should *not* use **Pitched Battle / Battle Rounds or Bombardment** since these are factored-in to their original CRT.
DOWNLOAD: Organization Displays for use with the above OSG Edition.
Link to download displays (pdf)

Second edition
Napoleon at Bay: The Campaign in France, 1814. Avalon Hill, 1983. ugly box

Third edition
Napoleon at Bay: Defend the Gates of Paris. OSG, 1997. boxed, Napoleon cover

NABXK
Napoleon at Bay Expansion Kit. OSG, 2020. ziplock. Works best with the 2nd or 3rd Editions (no mods). Use the most recent version available.

SCENARIOS

You have a number of choices. First, you can play the updated scenarios and campaign game purely at the campaign scale with whichever edition of the game (1978, 1979, 1983, 1997). You'll be playing with setups, unit strengths, and schedules based on the latest research OSG has developed on the 1814 campaign. Scenarios in the first edition included a quick Six Days scenario, the campaign game, and the "Unlimited Scenarios" guide to generating scenarios starting on any given day of the campaign. While you're still free to follow that approach, the *Expansion Kit* offers a campaign game plus seven scenarios with their own starting dates and durations. You can play the shorter "battle" scenarios as stand-alone contests or as alternate starting points for the campaign game, which runs through the March 29th game-turn (if not decided earlier). If you use the battle scenarios as alternate campaign starts, be sure to use the Campaign Rules starting on p. 4.

If you have *Napoleon Retreats,* you can start with any *Napoleon at Bay* scenario and use the interface rules to zoom in on part of the action at TLNB scale, stepping-up the map scale by about 7:1. The interface rules are purpose-made to yield smooth transitions.

NEW RULES

The new XK Standard Rules are derived from *Sun of Austerlitz,* with judicious reference to the Consolidated Rules. The objective was to create "a lighter set of rules" to speed and ease play like the original edition. We started with the rules as written in *Sun of Austerlitz* and cut "anything else that was put in there to gum up the works."

Campaigns of Napoleon is a game system of campaign-scale maneuver, force allocation, and command in which a player moves to take objectives, threaten enemy weaknesses, and misdirect his opponent. Combat resolution, especially in the original edition, is mostly a black box, a stochastic function into which the player feeds inputs and hopes for a good outcome. The inputs are the number of strength points, the unit types, and the mix of leaders. For example, having a commander with one or two bonus points is a luxury; organizing a subordinate leader commanding all cavalry for

pursuit is good planning. The player constructs his force ahead of time, moves it as advantageously as possible, and then—once in an enemy ZOC—lets the dice generate the outcome. Later editions of the *CoN* rules have added more player influence over combat resolution via battle types, bombardment, and reserves. Those rules satisfy players looking for more tactical detail than the original version provided, but they shift the emphasis temporarily from campaigning to battle management.

What makes for good play in *Campaigns of Napoleon*? Part of the knack is getting away from that wargamer-y idea of trying to get all your units into battle and then bashing away. *CoN* offers various ways for a player to waste his combat strength, including march attrition, unnecessary side battles, and force-on-force attrition-fests. A key skill is to achieve local superiority in an area the opponent can't afford to neglect, then win a lopsided battle, ideally with a Morale marker shift for a Critical Battle victory. As far as the Combat Phase is concerned, the player's emphasis is on creating conditions on the key battlefield that will yield a good, productive victory more than on directing the blow-by-blow details going on inside one combat resolution. To paraphrase Napoleon, "I'm taking a nap till 4:00, by which time the battle should be won. Don't wake me before then."

SCRUTINIZE THE PLAN

We considered, consulted, and scrutinized which rules to cut. We came up with arguments for and against various rules and mechanics, including some—like vedettes—that were in no serious danger of being cut. Eventually we agreed on the scope of these rulebooks:

Rules to cut:
Rearguard Battle Type
Battlefield Dynamics
Reserves
Variable Movement Allowance for activation
March Regiments
Rules to Keep:
Artillery Bombardment
Pitched and Pursuit Battle Type
Cavalry Differential Mod

Austrian statecraft went out the window. We went back and forth on whether to retain the Rearguard battle type. The vedette rules moved into the standard rules, where they belong. According to these rules as written, you can use vedettes even in the short battle scenarios.

We even considered Pitched and Pursuit battle types, but only for a day. Kevin pointed out, "In 1814 we had only 8 Pitched Battles; at every one of these battles, the forces were at least 15,000 on a side:

> *Brienne/La Rothiere (counts as 1 Pitched battle)*
> *Montmirail*
> *Craonne*
> *Laon*
> *Reims*
> *Montereau*
> *Arcis-sur-Aube*
> *The Battle of Paris*

When devising the CRT for the '97 edition we reduced the bloodiness of the 6-line results in order to account for some battles being Pitched Battles (*e.g.* Laon, Craonne, Montmirail, La Rothiere...).

When running your game, don't mix charts & tables from different editions. Use the charts and tables that came in the box (or ziplock).

The original CRT is based on an analysis of losses from battles in 1814.[1] *(see sidebar below).*

The CRT in the third edition differs from the original: it is less bloody and gives fewer extreme results, because it is designed for use along with possible multi-round battles and artillery bombardment. **If using the 1978 edition, do not use Pitched Battle, Battle Rounds, or Artillery.**

Counters and Organization Displays
• *All editions:* use the **new** counters and the track-type (1–10) displays from the second or third edition.
• The new set of counters includes several new units; with these added units, Organization Displays from any edition of the game **except the original TSG/OSG edition(s).**
Organization Displays *(see link at top of article).*

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[1] *West Point Atlas for the Wars of Napoleon;* James Lawford's *Napoleon: The Last Campaigns,* 1813-15; and Appendix I of David Chandler's *The Campaigns of Napoleon*

Developments in the NAB Series CRTs
Dave Demko

Napoleon at Bay first and second editions and *Battles of the Hundred Days* have the same CRT except that the latter doesn't show a possible "-1" die result (no functional difference). *Hundred Days* does have Pitched and Pursuit battle types, while original *NaB* does not. The CRTs for *Arcola* and *Bonaparte in Italy* 1979 look the same as the original *NaB's.* Neither of these Italian-theater games has the Pitched battle option. Discrete artillery units and bombardment appear in *Struggle of Nations* (Avalon Hill 1982) and *1809: Napoleon's Danube Campaign* (Victory Games 1984)*.* The *1809* game and all subsequent titles in the series include battle types (Pitched, Pursuit, sometimes Rearguard) as well as artillery.

Napoleon at Bay third edition has a substantially different CRT from the earlier editions, with 3:2 odds and lower result numbers at extreme odds (no more 10-0 or 1-10 results). The third edition does have artillery bombardment, and of course it has Pitched and Pursuit battle types. *Sun of Austerlitz,* the most recent of the 1x games/rules-sets before the NABXK, has a CRT similar to *Napoleon at Bay* 1997 but with some differences at very low and very high odds and one fewer odds column. It has Pitched and Pursuit battle types and artillery bombardments.

My original assumption was for the Expansion Kit to include a set of charts & tables stapled in the Exclusive Rules book. Here's why it matters: Owners of the first and second editions of *Napoleon at Bay* now have the NABXK's artillery bombardment rules and a few artillery units, but no Artillery Fire Table. It's true that they'll be using a CRT designed when losses from artillery fire were not part of the game, but that ameliorates the problem partially at best. Players can now choose between pitched and pursuit battles, but the CRT included in their game may not yield the intended average results if players start fighting multi-round battles. Such battles, even without artillery fire, are more likely to result in critical battles, thus affecting the morale track and the victory conditions.

Identify a CRT from the 1x series by looking at the 1-1 (NA) odds column. If its top and bottom results are 1-**5** and **4**-0, that's a first edition style chart, for use when all battles are in effect Pursuit. If the results are 1-**4** and **3**-1, that's a later style chart for use with games offering Pitched and Pursuit battle types.

BATTLE CASUALTIES ARE SECONDARY
Kevin Zucker

Believe it or not I produced a *Battle of Britain* design a long time ago. I used an approach similar to the NAB CRT to build a table of aircraft losses in battle. During the height of 1940, I discovered that losses did not go up in arithmetic lock-step with numbers of aircraft engaged. At Leipzig, the allies had so many troops they could not fit them all on the battlefield. In most cases a small proportion of the troops do the lion's share of the fighting.

As an experiment, let's say that:
· in each brigade, one regiment suffers most and fights longest.
· in each division, one brigade suffers more than the others; and so on, up the echelons.
· at Eylau, VII Corps suffered most of the losses.

Usually there is a key piece of terrain that both generals have appreciated the worth of. For example, at Austerlitz, both recognized the value of the Pratzen heights. When Napoleon "ceded" that dominating piece of terrain, the allies thought they had already won. However, for their planned "wheel" maneuver, a key piece of terrain was between Telnitz and Sokolnitz. The troops who fought there, Davout's III, suffered the most casualties on the battlefield. Their casualty rate should not be extrapolated throughout the whole French force: an average number means nothing. Casualties are terrain dependent, and holding those two key "chateaux" brought the ruination of their Ruskie assailants.

Usually the key terrain will channel the movement of one side—the one that has the burden of attack. If you want to understand that battle you have to bring the focus down to that key location.

Similarly, throughout history: at the battle of Grunwald, in 1410, the key piece of terrain happened to be where your commander was...

"Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen then personally led 16 banners, almost a third of the original Teutonic strength, to the right Polish flank, and Władysław II Jagiełło deployed his last reserves, the third line of his army. The melee reached the Polish command and one Knight, identified as Lupold or Diepold of Kökeritz, charged directly against King Władysław II Jagiełło. Władysław's secretary, Zbigniew Oleśnicki, saved the king's life…"

The battle came to a halt as everyone watched to see whether Jagiełło would live. So that combat and its (1/0) outcome was the key piece of the whole battle.

When I was a rookie game developer at SPI, I was living at John Young's apartment (I never knew where he was staying...) John had, obviously, a rich military history library, and I found a book, published during WWI, for military planners, which told them how many men would be chewed up in an hour or a day of the meat grinder. On the one hand this was the kind of statistic I wanted. But I found the inhumanity sickening, especially as it was being used to calculate 1000's of deaths before launching the operation...

This was, to me, a failure of imagination to look beyond the statistics, as the Germans managed to do in the inter-war period. Guderian and others developed a new view outside the box—a total Clausewitzian approach to war would never lead to victory.

Blitzkrieg is the primacy of maneuver over battle. Napoleon demonstrated this with every victory. By leaving the key terrain undefended, and then bringing his best general with his best division, onto the battlefield *after the enemy maneuver has commenced,* he used maneuver and terrain to trump raw numbers on the battlefield.

Napoleon's way of war necessitates taking the focus off of combat altogether, and placing it where it belongs, on maneuver.

My design intent with NAB was to show how *your* skill at maneuver—how savvy your play, how well you use vedettes, coordinate your offensive, disguise the timing and target—that maneuver is the prime determinant of victory, not battlefield statistics. Not the meat-grinder.

There are plenty of meat-grinder type games. NAB will obviously never fall in that category.

An attrition-based wargame could not produce any kind of approximation to the actual 1814 campaign. Napoleon is outnumbered 2.5:1 in manpower. He cannot afford to wage a war of attrition. (Just as the Union realized that they could ultimately bleed the South dry in the Civil War.)

This was the *first thing* I noticed when I started reading about the 1814 campaign. How the hell can Napoleon win, or even make a contest, when he's facing those kind of numbers?

How the hell did he manage to win a single battle?

That was my starting place and the first question to research.

The answer came when Chandler,[2] on page 955, mentioned "attrition." Non-combat losses almost always exceeded losses on the battlefield. Most designers to this day avoid the topic of attrition, for the same reason that the 1814 campaign is rarely if ever touched on in a game design. (Is there another game on this campaign besides NAB?)

Combat losses on the battlefield are not the main determinant of victory. The focus on losses is a red herring.

Napoleon advises, casualties on the battlefield are always about equal (between 50/50 and about 60/40). It is only when one side retreats that additional pursuit losses accrue to that side. For that reason Napoleon advises generals to hold onto the battlefield, if at all possible, even if you have the higher loss.

So if you are just looking at overall losses (include pursuit), they seem to be predictive, when actually the imbalance comes during pursuit. You have to separate out the pursuit losses from the battlefield losses.

If casualties in battle are not the determinant of victory, then what is? Terrain and maneuver.

In the Sun of Austerlitz, that battle has to be resolved as several separate combats each lasting multiple rounds of attack and counterattack. (An Example of play based on Austerlitz is at the back of the *Sun of Austerlitz* Exclusive Rules pp. 29-30—a page and a half of step-by-step AAR.) The CRT would be consulted 8 or 9 times per player in resolving the whole battle. So you'd have to take your Austerlitz casualty statistics, break out the pursuit losses, and then assign the battlefield losses to one or another of the separate battles.

What is important is whether the Coalition achieves the breakthrough between Telnitz and Sokolnitz, allowing Weyrother's wheel maneuver to reach Napoleon's LOC. Not likely, but that would be one way to win that battle and force a French retreat.

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[2] David G. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*