

Wargame



Design

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Bombardment and Hidden Forces

Napoleonic Timepieces

The General Retreat

When to Choose Pitched Battle

Wargame Design, Summer 2020

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THE PANDEMIC WAS PREDICTED IN 2018

"US officials were reportedly concerned that safety breaches at a Wuhan lab studying coronaviruses in bats could cause a pandemic."

<https://www.businessinsider.com/us-officials-raised-alarms-about-safety-issues-in-wuhan-lab-report-2020-4>

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EDITORIAL

Richard Berg, Composer

I often have a dream in which my friends who have died reappear, this one set in the NY Public Library, with massive marble staircases and huge rooms with



high ceilings. The place was entirely occupied by wargame designers, some I knew and others I didn't. I encountered Richard Berg on the stairs. He was "moving," with his half-finished designs boxed-

up ready to go. Even though he didn't look very well at all he came up to me and grabbed me by the lapels. I threatened to kill him if he didn't take his hands off me. (Of course he was already safe, having died a year ago.)

There was a car full of game designers outside waiting to take Richard away. They were yelling at him to hurry up. Finally they drove off. I went into his office and started flipping through a stack of prints, to see if he had any pictures of Redmond Simonsen (my old boss). When Berg suddenly re-appeared, I simply apologised and there were no more threats.

Over the years, designers spent many hundreds of man-hours in the NYPL doing research, so that building makes sense. Berg and I had a lot of history, when Richard was OSG's lawyer in the 70's. For years, Berg would rip all my game designs in his BROG. He suffered a tragedy when his son died. He has design credits on over 120 titles. That is three games a year for 40+ years. The man wielded a heckofa cookie-cutter.

He seemed very proud of his musical accomplishments. Sang doo-wop. Recorded with Tiny Tim...

(continued on page 5)

NAPOLEON AT BAY

Choosing Pitched Battle

Unkind to the Reckless

Mark Owens

It was notoriously difficult to induce a weaker opponent to risk a Pitched Battle. For this reason Napoleon would resort to a stratagem such as a fake demoralized retreat before Austerlitz, to pretend weakness. An opponent might be tempted by an apparent opportunity to encounter an isolated enemy corps, only to find the main force. You need to be careful in committing yourself until you have reconnoitred everything. In the *Campaigns of Napoleon*, generally the weaker side will choose Pursuit, but not always!

There are situations where Pitched Battle might be chosen by a side that's a bit weaker. One situation is when a multi-hex force attacks and there's a weak point in the array. Since the Counter-attack can choose one target hex to attack, it might be possible pick off one of those hexes and gain good odds. If the Attacker chose Pitched himself, a good result might wreak considerable havoc. Many times the opposing player will put stronger forces in the flanks making the center hex weaker. If you can break that middle hex, the attack collapses as only one of flanks can continue the attacking. If it's just a flank hex, you might be able to reduce the odds.

Another situation occurs when the attacker has a poor initiative rating that will limit that commander's ability to pick Pitched. I'll have to check the rules but this might also tie into attacking that weaker hex as I think it's not just picking the chit but having to reveal it.

Another factor that goes with this point is that most of the games give, IIRC, a bad modifier to the pursuit roll for the number of rounds of Pitched battle. A somewhat larger force with a poor initiative may attack an equal or higher initiative. As the Defender, you have to run some mental calculations here. If you choose pursuit, what is the worst that might happen?

For example, the average pursuit result considering the Resistance Modifier might put at least part of the large attacking force on a crucial road junction or bridge that will give you a headache or two in your turn. Will a turn or two of Pitched Battle create a sufficient modifier to

prevent a good pursuit roll from gaining such an advantage? Is your force strong enough to withstand the rounds of Pitched Battle that will also weaken the Attacker such that other nearby forces can attack in your turn to turn the erstwhile Attacker's 'victory' into a worse defeat?

As part of these calculations, who has an artillery advantage and cavalry advantage? Will these potential losses help you, hurt you, or make no difference? Consider the force makeup as well. Sometimes, the leader with the best Command Span has the artillery given to them as the central "HQ". Unfortunately, when the pursuing gets designated, as I recall, a force with artillery cannot pursue. Determine, then, if the artillery has been put under a command force that can be 'left behind' during pursuit.

Does the opposition have a large pursuing force (Imperial Guard, Cavalry, or both) that will provide the opportunity to pursue a considerable distance to inflict massive loss on you without your inflicting similar loss on the Attacker? How would it affect your position? Finally, there are options for 'Marching to the Sound of the Guns' where reinforcing forces might not be immediately available on the first round of Pitched battle. If you're using such a rule then perhaps you have a larger force that can join the combat but maybe is too far away to join immediately. Choose Pitched and endure, maybe, some early losses on the idea that your force additions will arrive and help reverse the numbers/advantages.

The last time I played *1807*, my French opponent was too 'direct', counting on Napoleon's Command Span, initiative, and bonus points to 'win'. I was expecting an end-around the Bug where I had set up my defenses. I had my forces weighted towards the west, expecting the French with their move/initiative advantages to swing wider. I had the cavalry under Prince Gallitzin.

Napoleon, on his turn, threw down a pontoon, and crossed with a strong force to attack the nearest Russian force. He did not send supporting forces. He crossed right into the teeth of my concentration and the nearby forces made their Forced March initiative rolls. Facing this array, he chose Pursuit battle despite being close to the river Bug. IIRC, I think he rolled well for the low odds attack and, coupled with Napoleon's bonus, inflicted some loss on my Russians who

revealed the 'Pitched' chit which I'd picked as I considered the cards all in my favor at that point.

I had the cavalry advantage and superior amounts of artillery so the French suffered from artillery losses as well. Defeated by my counterattack, the French retreated back across the pontoon. I released Prince Gallitzin to pursue but only to the river's edge. The French suffered double losses due to the retreat across the river.

Contemplating it afterwards, I wished I written down the strengths on a more permanent surface. In my opponent's case, would choosing Pitched have been a better initial choice? The French forces were in one hex and thus could not be split. They were strong enough to absorb some losses, and each round of Pitched might have dulled the pursuit roll results.

The point here is to consider the effects and benefits. As noted above, generally if the opponent has you by 2:1 or more, it's pretty easy to consider 'Pursuit' as your best choice. There are, though, extenuating circumstances. For example, what if that force that managed to flank you and put a ZOC on your retreat path was weak? Pitched Battle might allow you to reduce that force to a size where the ZOC cannot be exerted or eliminated entirely. Like the Emperor with his calipers, there's much in the Campaigns of Napoleon that requires decision-making based on the specific circumstances of your battle.

I really, really enjoyed *1807: The Eagles Turn East*. It produced a wonderful view of how and why the 1807 campaigning happened the way it did. It's not a cake walk for either side.

Game System and History

One of the beauties of the CON system is the reward for using "Napoleonic" techniques. One really begins to appreciate the road net and the importance of those bridges in the operations and strategy of the period. One of the things that's most difficult for newcomers to the system is that, every time the other guy moves adjacent, does not mean you have to accept a battle. If the other player is counting on a pursuit to discomfit your position, imagine his surprise if you succeed in withdrawing. With his former attacking forces

exposed, you may then maneuver to take advantage of that exposure.

If it's the main line of advance, perhaps that target force blows a bridge while other forces maneuver to cut behind that enemy. Use of blocking detachments can be key here. You might be able to plunge successfully between two forces (à la Waterloo planning) and then block one group of forces while your main force attempts to defeat, trap, and/or destroy the other part. It's here where early-war French leaders with high initiative can make a difference.

First, you can count on them moving more frequently even without APs. Yet they will also move more frequently in the Reaction Phase and with a high Initiative can often disengage successfully from lower initiative opposing leaders. It's not automatic, but a 4-rated Massena has a good chance of withdrawing from a 2 rated Davidovich. A 2 rated Davidovich will likely be unable to escape.

In Napoleon at Bay, I had a friend determine that all that was in front of him were pickets. He was expecting my forces, by their movements, to ready an assault on the Army of Bohemia. In fact, my main force with Napoleon was behind the screen. He pushed aside the pickets and made contact with Blücher and lots of Army of Silesia men. The force I had, though, withdrew from combat. Blücher had not considered his flank guards and the other reactions moved some of my forces closer so I could create a larger force.

On my turn, I jumped the lead force of Blücher's Army with Blücher and several other key leaders. I managed to ZOC with forces around this big stack and rolled in with Napoleon and able subordinate. That force was entirely crushed. Blücher escaped capture but I think Osten-Sacken went into the bag. The Army of Silesia would recover. After my French withdrew behind the pickets again, the army of Bohemia withdrew to a safer and better-supported location.

Summary: 1. Don't accept combat if you don't have to. 2. A leader with bonus will not help you on defense though a high initiative will limit pursuit. 3. Your forces need support stronger than a picket or cavalry strength point which can be pushed aside. 4. It's a great system which favors some boldness but can be unkind to the reckless.

WHAT ACTUALLY IS PITCHED BATTLE DEPLOYMENT?

In the Napoleonic era an army shouldn't suffer grave damage unless they intentionally sit down to fight a Pitched Battle; even Napoleon couldn't force a Pitched Battle on his opponent unless he made superior use of terrain and maneuver.

Historians constantly chide the Coalition for fighting Pitched Battles when they should not or didn't have to. That is a thread that runs through almost every Napoleonic history (except for the last campaigns).

When your forces move to contact, the type of battle formation you adopt at that moment determines what type of battle you will fight. The deployment for a Pursuit battle would be defense in depth (units spread-out checkerboard fashion), whereas a Pitched Battle would require a mass concentration of manpower at the crisis point.

You would have to decide before renewing the struggle, whether you want to change the basic style of battle. If your force isn't set up to do a successful rear guard, then you have to stay. The winner's deployment is irrelevant—unless he has dominant terrain or achieved a tricky maneuver.

In the Pursuit deployment, for every division in contact with the enemy you would have at least an equal number of divisions in reserve. Those in the second rank would be able to "disengage" the frontline, allowing them to pass through or around them.

When you pick Pitched you are betting that you are going to prevail and go forward.

Under the Trachtenberg Plan (1813) the Coalition deemed it inadvisable to stand up in Pitched Battle with Napoleon. It might profit you to run a 'pursuit' battle and withdraw (if you couldn't withdraw before combat) while your primary force moves and attacks on a line of approach toward your objective, whether a Victory City or a devastating cutting of the opponent's LOC. One reason the Trachtenberg Plan worked was because the Coalition forces were not pinned to a physical situation that might require standing up in a pitched battle. Consider not just whether you want a pitched battle but also think of how you might force the opponent into a pitched battle.

EDITORIAL (Cont'd from p.2)

"Music Director for the Army Theater in Frankfurt, Germany. Did lots of shows; met my first wife. I did not complain; better than Vietnam.



"Rock Singer. Late 50's early 60's. Sang with The Escorts, recorded with Tiny Tim. Made six records, received no money. Learned not to trust anyone in the Music industry.

The Escorts Featuring Goldie —I Can't Be Free / One Hand, One Heart - Coral 62349 (1963)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfqW0nb_iz8.

"Attorney. From 1971 to 1988, Criminal Defense trial attorney for both the Legal Aid Society and in private practice. Interesting clientele, some of whom may be getting out now.

"Composer. Wrote music and lyrics for two Off-Broadway shows: "The Adventures of Peter Pan", 1972, performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and "Alice", 1973, performed at City Center in NYC. Career ceased when I realized that the NY Times' review of the music in "Alice—"boring and derivative"—was true."

Just creating the score, copying out the parts for each player, rehearsing and performing with actors onstage is no mean feat.—Ed.

"Theater. Roles include such historical figures as FDR (in "Annie") and Ben Franklin (in "1776"). Militarily there's Major General Stanley (in "Pirates of Penzance"), Sir Joseph Porter KCB (in "HMS Pinafore"), Corporal Schultz (in "Stalag 17"), and The Duke of Plaza Toro (in "The Gondoliers). In terms of playing myself, throw in Sheridan Whiteside (in "The Man Who Came to Dinner"), Mr Applegate (The Devil, in "Damn Yankees"), Sganarelle (in Moliere's "The Doctor in Spite of Himself"). The Judge (in "Trial by Jury"), Lord Mountarrarat (in "Iolanthe") and both The Mikado and Pooh-Bah (but not at the same time, in "The Mikado"). Then there are the 'classic' Broadway roles, such as Nathan Detroit (in "Guys and Dolls"), Tevye (in "Fiddler on the Roof"), Lycus and Pseudolus (in "Funny Thing")."¹

¹ <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgamedesigner/135/richard-h-berg>

Napoleonic Watches

"A great leap forward in accuracy occurred in 1657 with the addition of the balance spring to the balance wheel ... This increased watches' accuracy enormously, reducing error from perhaps several hours per day to perhaps 10 minutes per day..."

"In April 1798, a month before setting out on his Egyptian campaign, General Bonaparte bought three pieces which were particularly representative of Breguet's output: a repeating watch, 'garde-temps with insulated escapement' n° 38; a travelling calendar and repeating clock n° 178 (the first of its kind); and a perpétuelle repeating watch n° 216."

"Marshal Ney and many other senior commanders would have carried watches by Breguet, the leading manufacturer in Europe at the time, whose watches were famed not only for their accuracy but also for their shock resistance."

Breguet created "the world's first wristwatch in 1810 (the Breguet No.2639), for Caroline Bonaparte, Queen of Naples."

"In country areas people used to live by the sun, even after the invention of clocks. They got up and went to bed with the sun. What the time was in Paris or Nice had very little impact on their daily lives. It was the coming of the railways in France, as in England, that started the move towards the standardisation of time."

"There was no such thing as standard time in 1815. Instead, people went by solar time, setting clocks and watches when the sun reached its highest point in the sky and pronouncing this 'none.' Needless to say, the precise occurrence of noon varied according to location: if officers on campaign failed to allow for this, their watches would become increasingly inaccurate as the



Breguet n° 217

miles passed on the march. At Waterloo it is clear British officers had not synchronized their watches, survivors quoting anywhere between 10 a.m. and 1/30 p.m. as the hour at which the battle began."

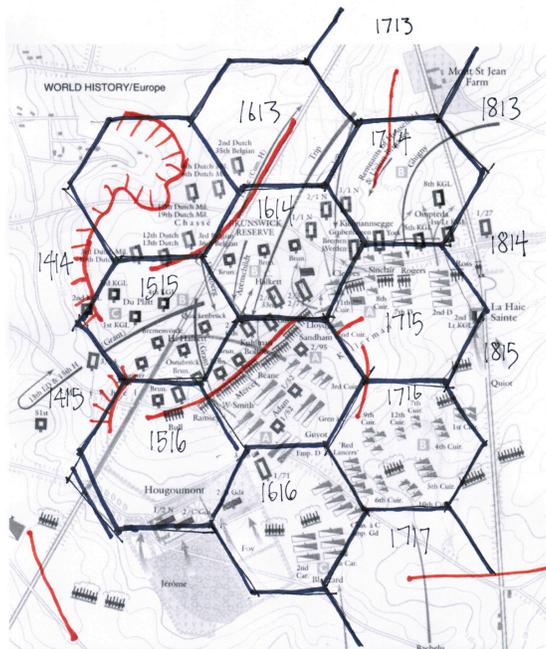
"The first adoption of a standard time was by railway companies using GMT kept by portable chronometers. The first of these companies to adopt standard time was the Great Western Railway (GWR) in November 1840." In November 1884, GMT was adopted universally at the International Meridian Conference in Washington, DC, USA. As a result, the International Date Line was drawn up and 24 time zones were created."

"Before 1891, each town and city in Metropolitan France had its own time based on local solar time. In 1891, to avoid complications with railway timetables, time was unified in Metropolitan France and based on the solar time of Paris."

General Retreats at Bautzen and Austerlitz

Creating a series design like TLNB requires the designer to take into account the experiences of many different battlefields, and attempt to find the common thread. A TLNB game is like a hypothetical “average” Napoleonic battle—except that there was no “Average Napoleonic Battle” that I am aware of. The state of war changed continually. There was not one Napoleonic War but several—one for each year, more or less, plus Spain.

Waterloo serves as the “default” battle for most everyone coming to this subject. However, Waterloo was weird! That matchup of generals and forces was unique. Wellington was all about finding the best defensive terrain and trying to draw the opponent onto ground of his own choosing. Misinformation is always a vital part of a successful campaign—false intel, misleading your opponent, drawing him into a trap. Wellington scrutinized the road network correctly, having ridden that route to Brussels many times, identified the famous crest his forces would defend months beforehand. Napoleon *might* have been able to outmaneuver Wellington, but not while another enemy army was in the field.



Waterloo—crests in red

In 1815 Napoleon’s “time for war” was running out. Since Moscow he had won Lützen, Bautzen—maybe—and Dresden. In 1814 he won a significant victory against Blücher at Montmirail, but then had to retreat at Laon.

When we originally came up with the General Retreat rule, it was seen as a measure of desperation, a last resort to avoid a total rout. What we have found is that—at Bautzen for example—a more nuanced use of the G_R denied Napoleon the knock-out blow, kept the army in the field, eventually to come back and turn the tables at Leipzig.

So, what does it mean to say Bautzen was a French victory? That is where we need levels of victory: A strategic victory means the campaign is over, or nearly so. A tactical victory means one side controls the battlefield, but hasn't delivered the knock-out blow. A marginal victory means one side did a little better. Bautzen could be considered at most a French Tactical Victory.

Looking at ownership of the battlefield alone isn't enough to judge the victory. True, this has been the default criteria for historians, but we as game designers go beyond the hard facts of the historical outcome. We attempted to visualize the follow-up situation by constructing a list of 8 metrics, including Combat losses, morale, baggage trains, VP hexes, Commanders, and units exited. When you string all of those together, you get a clearer picture than just control alone.

Generally, the clever military historian sets out to prove that the actual historical outcome was inevitable. But the historical outcome may have been influenced by seemingly insignificant or random occurrences, when many other outcomes would have been more likely—and only the intervention of "her sacred majesty chance," as Frederick puts it, gave us the “inevitable” outcome that history recorded.

A single die roll can be decisive of the whole battle... "For want of a nail the shoe was lost, for

want of the rider the battle was lost..." There are not just one but many moments of that kind in every battle. A battle is chaos.

The roll of the die is the most realistic moment in wargaming. Things are still less controllable than you think they should be. There are just too many die rolls, and any one of them can alter the course of events.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect

A playable and fun game is mandatory for our design intent. A game won't be fun for the side which always loses, and no one will want to play that side.

Each side needs a 1/3 chance of winning, but a 50/50 chance is better. A game that goes to the last turn without any lock on victory by either side is the aim of playtesting.

Some will say, "A historical result is my only metric." Our design intent says a historical result should be possible, not necessarily a lock. Otherwise, play it once and you're done. Some gamers want that, but to be a truly great game a game should offer unlimited replayability.

If I could have a perfect story arc for Austerlitz, I would like to see a range of outcomes: On one end of outcomes, the Coalition wins handily, and at the other end, the French win overwhelmingly. At one end I would like to see the Coalition Player take Tellnitz and Sokolnitz perhaps, and advance some way toward the French S/S, toward Maxdorf. At the other extreme, the French might end up taking the Posoritzer P.O. and enveloping II Corps.

There are many different outcomes in-between, depending upon the strategy employed. A Coalition Player should be able to win a Marginal victory just by not trying for Tellnitz, and not abandoning the Pratzen. If this happens, Napoleon can only win an ordinary victory; just a Tactical one, let's say. What we strive for is a game where each side can win Strategic, Tactical or Marginal Victories with even chances. At the worst, one side should have 1/3 chance of winning.

So—as with many rules in TLNB—we are breaking new ground with the General Retreat rule.

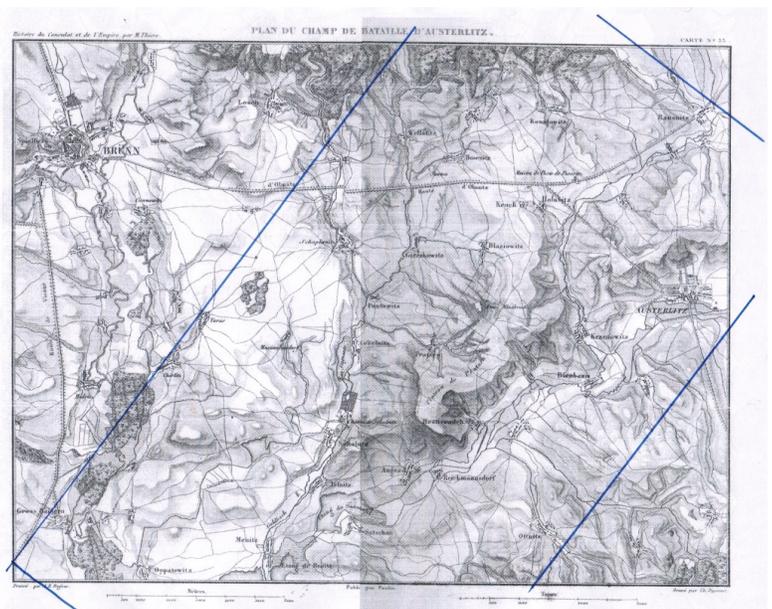
Some will say, leaving the field to live and fight another day is hardly a victory; the side holding the ground at the end of the day has a better claim to victory, but not a lock.

Most wargames don't have such things as a G_R and players will keep fighting when historically, the more rational goal of self-preservation of the army would have kicked-in. For many years, the Coalition subsisted on "living to fight another day." For the Austrians, preservation of the army became their lodestar all the way through 1814.

It has been argued that Napoleon needed a knock-out blow to end the Austerlitz campaign. His army wasn't in condition to be chasing the enemy around Bohemia in the wintertime.

Napoleon also held the Eylau battlefield 14 months later. But this was a hollow victory, as he was forced to pull back to the Vistula in a few days. In the same way, had he lost Austerlitz he would have been forced to abandon Bohemia and pull back to the Inn. That is what the VPs in the game are trying to show.

Wheel-Austerlitz, *Pratzen centered map outline in blue*



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Bombardment and Hidden Forces

**Tobul, A., Rodek, E., Zucker, K.,
Moeller, C., Silverstein, C.**

Sometimes the simplest of game questions can lead to farther-reaching speculations...

Playing Napoleon at Leipzig with Series Rules 7.34, my old fellow is unleashing shells on my light cavalry spread in vedettes. Could you provide me some additional explanations about bombardment rules?

- 1. Is it possible to bombard vedettes? In case of 1R, do vedettes take loss? With this kind of loss, do vedettes finish UAR or PEU box?*
- 2. Is it possible to fire on hidden forces?*

Vive l'empereur!



EXAMPLE: Austrian player turn. Vedettes move adjacent to Old Guard Inf and Art. Austrian inf move behind vedettes.

At the start of the Combat Phase Part 1 is LOS Step. Vedettes can be seen by OG Art but not the Austrian infantry. Basically, the opposing army is covered at its front by vedettes. Austrian Infantry remain hidden.

Part 2 is the **RBC phase** and the Austrian vedettes retreat 2 hexes (through the infantry). This they do **AFTER** the LOS segment. They leave a front of unrevealed units facing the enemy guns (even though they are within 3 hexes).

Part 2A is Artillery Reaction fire. There is 'something' within 2 hexes of the OG Artillery (hidden under the allied Hidden Force Marker), having not been revealed during the LOS phase.

Tobul, Aaron C

Kevin, I would say no to question 1. Rule 13.33 says the target must be a combat unit or leader and 16.24 says that vedettes are non-combat units and may neither attack or defend.

Rule 13.33 answers question 2 also, I think. The target of a bombardment must be in range and LOS.

Eugene Rodek

A1) Vedettes may return to play through reorganization (16.24).

A2) I would say not. You cannot see them, how can you fire on them?

Kevin Zucker

Is it possible to fire on hidden forces?

The rules require an arty unit to have an LOS. An LOS is 3 hexes, same as bombardment range.

Is it possible to bombard vedettes? Rule 13.33 says the target must be a combat unit or leader and 16.24 says that vedettes are non-combat units.

I agree that the rules are quite clear on this point. Aaron is correct that a non-combat unit cannot be bombarded or attacked either. (See also 16.24.)

We still need to give an answer for the question, "*Is it possible to fire on hidden forces?*" I think the simple answer would have to be "NO."

Chuck Silverstein

I do think the LOS rules are such that units in a town or woods hex are revealed if an enemy unit can see into that hex, no?

Units are revealed at the start of the combat phase. So technically one could have an artillery unit fire at a revealed vedette in its LOS, but reality is that the gunners wouldn't waste ammo on such a trifling target.

In a game of Montmirail I think, my worthy opponent Chris was using supply wagons to bluff me away. I'm guessing that artillery could bombard a revealed wagon, but I again think the gunners would wait. Gee we could have DR for ammunition explosion, loss of artillery ammo affecting subsequent bombardments—I know, don't go there!

Kevin Zucker

I still think the simple answer would have to be "NO." It will work fine that way. Otherwise you're opening a can of worms. How do you

handle hidden vedettes that are being fired upon? This would become a very large, very ugly exception to 16.24.

Do you know how long it takes to reposition the guns? By the time you manhandle the guns into a new position, the opportunity may be gone.

Actually, the game doesn't go into the immobility of the heavy artillery. Once a gun fires, it *has* to be in a fixed position. At the very least, a gun should only fire or move in one turn. But that clutters up things because you inevitably forget which arty have moved. So better to abstract that level of detail entirely. That kind of bookkeeping isn't fun.

Napoleonic artillery isn't really in the business of acquiring a moving target. Re-siting a battery of guns takes precious moments as the cavalry scampered away. Guns are repositioned by main force. On many occasions the guns were pre-sited and hardly moved at all until the end of the battle. The range could be adjusted by a screw, but even this took more time than you might realize.

If you allow arty to fire on unidentified stacks, then inevitably you are going to hit vedettes...

Eugene Rodek

As Kevin is known to have said: "Keep it simple." Hidden Force: NO, you cannot bombard a hidden force. If the rules allow it to become sighted, before the bombard phase, then they are no longer hidden and can be bombarded.

Gene

Kevin Zucker

More on artillery vs. vedettes—an example from the Franco-Prussian War:

On the morning of the 15th, the French General Forton was sent to clear this road, but found that the hostile cavalry had stretched a cordon there, and threatened to envelope the army of Marshal Bazaine in its meshes. To drive away these horsemen the French opened an artillery fire, which naturally did little execution among the isolated vedettes, while the supports were hidden in the indentations of the ground. During this artillery action the Prussian horsemen observed what they required. It is of course easy

now to perceive that if General Forton had pushed forward boldly, he might have swept the unsupported cavalry away, but he could not, from the want of knowledge of outpost duty among his cavalry, tell what was before him, and the consequence was that the Prussian cavalry held its ground in the vicinity of Mars-le-Tour.

Gun siting advice from Elting:

Artillery usually sought positions on low hills for wider observation and fields of fire. Slight elevations [such as crests] were better than higher ones since there would be less dead space immediately in front of the position and also a better chance for effective ricochet fire. Positions directly to the rear of your own infantry or cavalry were to be avoided because they offered the enemy a double target. Also, the noise of your projectiles passing low over them made your troops nervous, especially if an occasional defective shell fell short among them.

Christopher Moeller

House Rule: You can fire at Hidden Forces, but the defender rolls secretly and if it's his vedettes (or vedettes and leaders and baggage wagons) says blandly, after rolling "no result."

Kevin Zucker

Section 13.33 Designate the Target Hex: "The target must be a combat unit or leader... in range and in the LOS of all Bombarding units." To me, that says you cannot bombard a target that you cannot see.

Christopher Moeller

I don't have a problem with a simple "you can't fire at hidden units". It makes vedettes as a screening force more useful still.

Eugene Rodek

I agree with Chris. The Vedettes do their job to screen and then move away. The real battle is fluid and not in discrete steps. While in the example, the old guard arty is setting up and

gaining range on the vedettes demonstrating in front of them, the vedettes suddenly move off. Yes, there is this blob of soldiers behind them, but within the span of this segment there is insufficient time to re-range and bombard these troops whose "uncovering" is done at the end of the combat phase.

Kevin Zucker

A Leader is different. It takes only one lucky shot to take down a single leader. On the other hand, one vedette, more or less, doesn't affect the vedette. (As a side note, even when we say a vedette is "eliminated" it is really scattering and reassembling on the way to HQ.)

Eugene Rodek

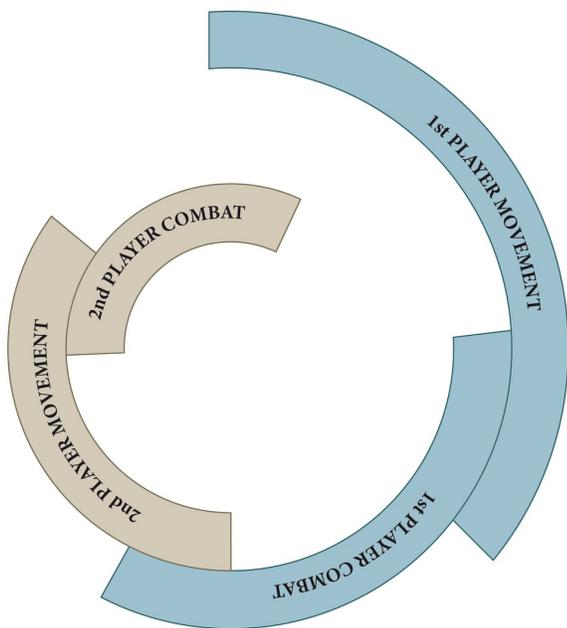
It is certainly possible that the guns could have re sighted if the vedettes left early enough in the time period. That is where the design element comes into play IMHO. To account for that in the rules we would need another LOS step (or a footnoted LOS step), something that is not really needed IMHO. It also subtracts from a very useful function of the vedettes in their ability to screen advancing units, or units advancing against you.

Kevin Zucker

One of the greatest abstractions in wargame design is the distribution of homologous activities into their own turn segments.

In real life, just like all other activities, LOS is ongoing and constantly updating. In order to make the game playable, you don't want to stick three or four LOS segments in.

Although at times on the battlefield everything seems to be happening all at once, for long periods of the battle, there is a definite alternation of effort by one side and then the other.



Sketch representing the time clock of one Game-Turn, with 12 at the top. A complete revolution is 60 minutes.

Each Phase is shown as 20 minutes, overlapping the adjacent phases by 5 minutes, but any one of them could not last longer (with more overlap).

The First Player Combat Phase, for example has (a minimum of) 20 minutes for all 6 steps, starting at 15 minutes past the hour...

- :15 1. LOS
- :15 2. Cavalry Retreat, ARF (2 min.)
- :16 3. Bombardment (8 min.)
- :20 4. Cavalry Charges if any (8 min)
- :21 5. Attacks (15 min)
- :35 6. LOS
- Total: 20 minutes

Each step above overlaps its neighbors (with the total amount of time for each activity shown in parenthesis). Step 2 of the Combat Sequence could take up as little as 2 minutes.

Let's check the math. If vedettes turn tail and run, how far can they get in 2 minutes of real time? The game lets them go 1,050 yards (2 hexes, 0.6 mi). A horse can gallop (for short bursts) at 34 m.p.h., which works out to 1,000 yards per minute. So two-minutes (in the chart above) for Cavalry Retreat Before Combat is sufficient.

Is 8 minutes a reasonable time allowance for the bombardment to prepare an infantry attack? The smaller guns could fire one round a minute (hypothetically), the larger guns were slower. Let's say each gun in a battery of 1 SP got 4 shots off in 8 minutes, so 32 projectiles launched toward the enemy. With 1 SP it is only possible to achieve a "Dr" or a "Suppressed" (unless firing at point blank range).

Cavalry Charge: Cavalry can charge up to 4 hexes, even further, but at a trot or a canter, so allow 8 minutes.

Attacks could be going on for the full 20-minute duration of the Combat Phase, until at some point enemy reaction would take the initiative over.

Summary

Vedettes cannot be bombarded as they are not combat units per Rule 13.33. Vedettes are quick moving scouting units which enemy artillery would have difficulty adjusting to their movement (even in one hex) and provide an insufficient target that would merely be a waste of ammunition.

Hidden units cannot be bombarded. Rule 13.33 is very specific that the target must be in the LOS of all bombarding units according to the Sequence of Play. The 'hidden' unit is not in the LOS at the appropriate sequence step. The gunners would have little time to relay their guns after the cavalry retreat before combat. In real life most actions occur simultaneously; however, within the game itself, a strict sequence order is essential for ease of play and simplifying the handling of those complex interactions.