

Game Review

by James M. Flanagan

PUBLICATION DATA

Title: Leipzig. **Publisher:** Simulations Publications, Inc. **Publication Date:** September 1971 (Second Edition). **Price:** \$5.00. **Sold:** By mail. **Designer:** J.F. Dunnigan. **Physical Design and Graphics:** R.A. Simonsen and M. Frederick. **Playtesting and Development:** J. Young & R. Champer. **Rules Organization and Editing:** J. Young, R.A. Simonsen. **Designer Credits:** Mr. Dunnigan designed most of the recent AH games and the bulk of those published by Simulations Publications, Inc.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Subject: Napoleonic warfare on the strategic level. **Leipzig** simulates the 1813 campaign. **Packaging:** 12" x 15½" mailing envelope.

RULES

Complexity Rating: (8) The rules reflect the well-intentioned, but somewhat overdone, drive of Simulations Publications toward complication.

Clarity Rating: (5) The great exertion evident here to cover every contingency results in redundancy, which only serves to reduce clarity.

Comprehensiveness Rating: (7) For a strategic game, the number of elements covered is good.

Accessibility and Organization Rating: (4) The rules seem slick and very graphic but you are often left with the impression that some "exception" is buried under the prose. The rules are printed on both sides of one 14" x 22" and one 9½" x 11" sheet. Some items are segregated in boxes and charts. Other material is organized under bold face headings. Reference is sometimes difficult due to repetition. **Reading Comprehension Time:** You can cover the ground in an hour or so, but frequent reference is necessary as you play. **Word Count:** 4,950. **Illustrated Examples of Play: 1.**

Expandability Rating: (8) This game is high on variables. One scenario covers the actual historical situation in the Spring. Another deals with the Summer campaign. Then you have five "What-if?" situations based on what might have occurred if this or that historical factor had developed differently. Austrian intervention or neutrality, for example, was a crucial element. **Rules Sections Headings:** The Game, Game Equipment, General Course of Play, Game Length, Movement, Zones of Control, Stacking and Unit Breakdown, Supply, Combat, Retreat Order of Preference, Leaders, Fortress and Siege, Reconnaissance, How to Use the Scenarios, Special Game Rules, Spring Scenarios (1 through 4), Summer Scenarios (5 through 7), The Campaign Game, Special Campaign Game Rules, How to Use the Combat Results Table, How to Win, Forced Marches, Terrain Effects. **Notable Game Features:** Although few things can be called true innovations anymore, since over the years wargamers have explored almost every conceivable gimmick and angle, many games create fascinating variations of old themes. In Leipzig, the stacking, unit breakdown and buildup, supply, leaders, retreat before combat, combat results table and forced march rules are all examples of brilliant game design. Though sometimes explained in a confusing way, they are still high grade ore.

COMPONENTS

Playing Surface: The map is 23" x 29" unmounted heavy cardstock. It is tan with varying tints of gray and black. **Type of Grid Module:** Hexagon. There are 1,760 hexes in all. Each one is .625" from side to side. The scale is 7 km to the hex. **Clarity of Symbolization Rating: (8)** The map is very well done in this sense. **Types of Terrain/Percentage of total area (C=affects combat, M=affects movement):** Fortress hexes, .51% (C), River hexes (sides) 168%(C,M), Bridged River hexes (sides) .96% (C), Mountain hexes 11.3% (C,M) Mountain Pass hexes .73% (C). **Playing Pieces:** square .625" die cut counters. 234 are in the game. They break down as follows: 10 Supply, 3 Depot, 21 Cavalry, 73 Infantry and 10 Leaders for each side. The total used in each scenario varies from Scenario no. 1-108 units (not including supply, which is a variable) to Scenario no. 6-175 units (ditto). Scenario no. 8 is the campaign game. It begins with the Spring order of battle (108 units). As it continues, several variables besides supply affect the number of pieces in play. Bavarian Defection, German Rebellion and Austrian Intervention can all determine the strength of both sides.

Quality of Playing Pieces Rating: (8) The pieces are of the traditional sort. They are easy to read and use. The face indicates type, strength, movement, unit size and designation etc. **Functionally Distinct Units:** The infantry has its usual role. The cavalry have greater flexibility in withdrawals and dealing with enemy zones of control. Supply and depot pieces greatly affect the abilities of other units in movement (For forced marches) and combat. The unique leader units are important. Numerical factors have been worked out estimating the abilities of the various generals involved. Each leader affects the combat strength of the troops he leads — sometimes decisively. **Set Up Aids:** Designer Notes, Reinforcement Chart, Combat Results Table, Victory Point Schedule, Forced March Tables, Terrain Effects Chart, Order of Battle Charts (with explanation for each scenario).

PLAY MECHANICS

Set Up Time: This changes with the situation used, but if you have your playing pieces sorted, about 10 minutes will be enough. If you like to pour over initial deployments, as we do, it takes longer. **Total Number of Game-Turns:** All the scenarios last twelve turns except the campaign game which lasts thirty-five turns. **Average time for each Player's Move:** Varies from 8 to 13 minutes, depending on scenario. The above estimates assume that both players are quick movers who have mastered the rules. **Decision Point:** This usually comes fairly late in the game, around turn 9 or 10. **Average Playing Time:** Three hours plus. There can be considerable variation depending on the players and their strategies. We tend to talk and deliberate so our games run about four hours. **Average Number of Die Rolls Per Turn:** Only a couple per side as far as combat is concerned. Fighting is often not worth it, unless you can destroy a sizable force. A clever enemy will not concentrate his forces unless it suits his purposes. Forced Marches account for a sizable percentage of your die rolls if you are a blitz minded player. **Movement System:** 1. French player moves 2. French player allocates supply for intended attacks 3. Allied player may, in certain cases, retreat his units under attack. 4. Allied player allocates supply to units of his

choice. 5. Combat is resolved. Then the Allied player moves, in the same sequence. **Conflict Mechanics:** The Attacker's strength is computed as a percentage of the defenders strength (60%, 80%, 100%, 110%, etc.) Quite different from "rounding off" as we do with most tables. Combat results include "scattered," "dispersed," "destroyed" or "partially exchanged." Automatic destruction is achieved when the attacker can launch a 500% attack against enemy infantry. **Victory Conditions:** Each scenario has its own victory conditions. These are based on accumulating points, which are awarded for possessing geographical objectives, destroying enemy units and in some scenarios (1 through 4) the French player receives points for advancing units off the eastern edge of the map. **Play Balance:** Varies with each scenario but generally Napoleon is on the short end of the stick. In addition he has to contend with enemies in a superior supply and reinforcement situation. The better quality of the French leadership is his ace in the hole. **Realism:** The game has a relatively high order of realism. It certainly is well above any other game we have played in the effectiveness of its simulation of Napoleonic warfare.

SUMMARY

Overall Physical Quality Rating: (6). The main drawbacks (if one considers them as such) are the unmounted, colorless map and the lack of a hard box. That, of course, is why the cost is only \$5.00. **Overall Accuracy Rating: (8).** The best job yet for Napoleonic wargaming. **Playability Rating: (6).** Fairly good, once the rules have been hurdled. **Rating for Novice Players: (4).** New Players are advised to cut their teeth on the earlier AH games or games of the "Napoleon at Waterloo" level. We understand *S&T* will be turning to more of these games in future issues. **Overall Rating for "Playability" Fans: (4).** If you like to read the rules for a game and sit right down to solving the problem presented by the game, then Leipzig and, (dare we say it,) Simulations Publications games in general are a pain in the neck. **Overall Rating for "Historical Realism" Players: (8).** People who delight in complication will enjoy this one. It contains a number of really fine features not found in most games. **Overall Rating for "Action/Excitement" Players: (3).** There isn't much "bang, bang" in Leipzig. It would be more appealing to a Manstein than a Patton. Slick maneuvering and forethought are the keys to victory.

Leipzig is the kind of game we would never pass over. It is outstanding for the number of "new" concepts it introduces. The situation is intriguing. The mechanics are innovative, and all in all, it is a rewarding investment. Before you can play the game, a considerable amount of time and effort has to be put into mastering the rules. Our usual procedure with Simulations Publications games like Kursk, Leipzig, Korea, etc., is to prune the rules by about 30 to 40%. Conflicting, or apparently conflicting, statements have to be examined and reconciled. Repetitious prose has to be sliced off and sometimes additional tables and charts constructed. For example, we don't care for the approach where elements influencing a move (ZOC, terrain, weather, etc.) are all reflected in a movement point system. It becomes a monumental bore. We are experimenting with other ways of showing the effects of conditioning factors. Some work and some don't. If you are willing to go in for something of this sort, and we are, then Leipzig, and other games on this level, are gems. ●●