

# BATTLE OF NATIONS

## Napoleon in Amber

by Paul G. Dangel

*Readers who have the Battle of Nations Folio game may wish to break it out at this point and follow along with Mr. Dangel's account of the historical action in terms of the game. One thing that may become apparent by doing so is the difficulty of simulating the hesitancy and lack of communication on the part of the various commanders and units. Perhaps, if one took several snifters of Napoleon brandy before playing the game next time...* —RAS

The four day battle of Leipzig was determined as much by the campaign that preceded it as by the decisions and actions that occurred during the battle itself. Therefore, to intelligently understand the simulation of the battle of Leipzig a cursory examination of the campaign of 1813 is warranted.

After the disaster in Russia at the end of 1812, Napoleon rebuilt his army while his stepson, Eugene, and the fortress garrisons in Poland kept the Russians at bay. In April of 1813, the Russian and newly formed Prussian Armies had driven as far as the Salle River in Saxony, taking Berlin, Dresden and Leipzig along the way. Napoleon with his new Grand Army was determined to recover Saxony, relieve the garrisons in Poland, and let Austria know that she shouldn't get any ideas about turning against France. On May 2, a confused battle at Lutzen, a few kilometers south of Leipzig, showed the Russian and Prussian allies that Napoleon could still win a battle. Withdrawing to Bautzen, east of the Elbe River and Dresden, the Allies turned to make a stand. Catching up with them on May 9, Napoleon gave the Allies another rough handling, but failed to make victory decisive because of an order misunderstood by Ney. After this second defeat, the Allies withdrew further east to Schweidnitz in Silesia near the Austrian border. By June, Napoleon caught up and captured Breslau, an important Russian supply base. In the north, an attempt to take Berlin by Marshal Oudinot was easily turned back by the Prussians. On June 2, Tsar Alexander offered a ceasefire.

Although Napoleon was in a superior strategic position and had two victories behind him, he was not in any condition to continue the campaign. More important than forcing the Allies out of Saxony, the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen revealed a dangerous shortage of cavalry in the Grand Army. The Allied withdrawals from Saxony to Silesia were orderly and unharassed by French cavalry. On the other hand, Cossacks unceasingly raided French supply trains and groups of stragglers. These French stragglers

grew in increasing numbers as the untried conscripts learned the rigors of warfare. Many of them had been drawn from retired veterans who were medically unfit, and others were no more than children. These troops proved very reliable in battle, but they were not up to the long marches with few supplies. Fatigue also took a heavy toll on the French units. It was because of these factors that Napoleon decided to accept the Allied armistice.

The armistice ended on August 12, after Austria and Sweden joined the Allied camp. During the interim, the Allies examined the mistakes they made before the cease-fire and the shortcomings of the French. Exploiting these French deficiencies and their own numerical superiority, they devised a new strategy for defeating Napoleon. The Allies divided their forces between three areas: first, in Austria, was the Army of Bohemia with 230,000 men under General Schwarzenberg; second, near Berlin, was the Army of the North, commanded by ex-Marshal of France Bernadotte with 110,000 men; and finally was the Army of Silesia, under General Blucher in Silesia, with 95,000 men. An additional force, the Army of Poland was forming in Poland under the Russian General Bennigsen. Each of these armies was to act independently, but with the common purpose of attacking Napoleon's supply lines.

If Napoleon responded by attacking any one of these three armies, that army was to deny battle and withdraw; but it should only withdraw if it was suspected that Napoleon in person was commanding the French force. Meanwhile, the other two Allied armies should continue to pressure the French supply lines and defeat detached French forces not commanded by Napoleon. Hence, by using the paucity of French cavalry, the low marching endurance of the French conscripts, and the dependency upon supply trains, the Allies planned to march the Grand Army ragged through attrition. By avoiding combat with Napoleon directly, they could preserve their own army's men and morale. By fighting only against Napoleon's subordinates, with superior numbers, the Allies could force Napoleon to march to the aid of his beleaguered Marshals time and again. Once the French were worn into the ground, the Allies would concentrate and finish Napoleon off. This strategy would set the stage for the final battle at Leipzig.

Except for a battle at Dresden (August 26-27), in which Schwarzenberg got into a fight with Napoleon, the Allies stuck to their strategy. For three weeks they made

Napoleon march back and forth between Blucher and Schwarzenberg, both of whom alternatively attacked and retreated in response to Napoleon's moves. The French Emperor was constantly off balance and unable to generate any real offensive action of his own. Finally, in September, he sent Marshals Ney and Oudinot north to take Berlin and defeat Bernadotte's Army of the North. By September 6 the operation was bungled and Napoleon set out with the rest of the Grand Army to help. Leaving southern Saxony enabled the French to fight on a smaller front and shorten their supply lines. But Napoleon left behind at Dresden a sizable garrison consisting of two whole army corps. Also known to Napoleon was that Blucher was moving his Army of Silesia northwestwards to link up with Bernadotte. Blucher made this move because Bennigsen finally arrived in southern Saxony to join Schwarzenberg.

With the main Allied forces divided to the north and south of him Napoleon planned to screen Schwarzenberg and Bennigsen, and attack Blucher and Bernadotte with the main army for a decisive victory. Using Marshal Murat with a small infantry/cavalry force to keep an eye on Schwarzenberg, Napoleon began his advance on Blucher (October 8) who was north of Leipzig. But Blucher would not comply with the French designs and withdrew to the west where Napoleon lost all contact with him.

Meanwhile, the Allies realized that Napoleon was rapidly becoming boxed in. Schwarzenberg left some troops to screen the French in Dresden and pressed on to take Leipzig. But instead he became pinned by Murat's units just south of the city. Finally, Napoleon had hold of an enemy army and he ordered his corps to move south to Leipzig by October 14.

### October 14-15: Plans and Deployment

On October 14, Napoleon entered Leipzig with elements of the Grand Army. The same day, Murat was engaged with the advanced forces of Schwarzenberg in what was probably the largest cavalry action of the 1813 campaign. By late afternoon, French infantry arrived from the north and drove the Allied horsemen near the high ground called the Galgenberg Heights (hexes 2211-2212) and the town of Liebertwolkit (2210). By nightfall, Napoleon had close to 200,000 men advancing on or within the Leipzig area, with about 20,000 belonging to Marshal Reynier's VII Corps within two days marching distance.

To the south of the battlefield of the 14th, the Army of Bohemia was in a more dispersed



defensive until Blücher joined him; but, in fact, Schwarzenberg was to get in the first punch. His Army of Bohemia was deployed with Kleist's Prussian Corps (4x10-4) on the left at Crobern (2615) next to the Pleisse river; Prince Eugen of Württemberg in the center (2x6-4); and the Russian Gortschakoff on the right (6-4, 5-4), next to the University Copse (2607 and the surrounding forest hexes). On the eastern side of this woody area was the Austrian IV Corps (2x12-4) under Klenau. On the west side of this line was the Austrian II Corps (8-4, 12-4) commanded by Meerveldt, who also had available two Austrian reserve divisions (2x12-4). These units were deployed between the Elster and Pleisse Rivers. Further west was Gyulai's II Corps (2x9-4) at Markranstadt.

Schwarzenberg's initial plan was for a main attack in the swampy, restricted area where Meerveldt had his Corps and reserves. Tsar Alexander rejected this idea flatly and with good reason. Schwarzenberg's next proposal was more conservative. It called for Kleist, Eugen and Gortschakoff to make frontal attacks against the opposite French line, while Klenau moved against and turned the French left at Liebertwolk. As the French retreated, Meerveldt would attack across the Pleisse River at Dolitz (2117) and Connowitz (1918) to cut them off. At the same time as the main attack, Gyulai was to attack Lindenau (1421) and Plagwitz (1521) to deny a western escape route. Blücher's Army of Bohemia, approaching from the north, would assault Leipzig from that direction.

#### *Game-Turn One: Early Morning*

Not anticipated in either army's plan was the cold misty weather that began the morning of October 16. For Napoleon, this bad visibility meant that Macdonald's XI Corps would be late from moving out of their bivouac area around Taucha (0607) to their battle position east of Liebertwolk. To the west of Macdonald, Marmont received his orders to move south through Leipzig to act as the mobile reserve. He found these orders questionable because, throughout the night, his pickets observed the campfires of the Army of Silesia around Scheuditz (0131). For this reason, he was in no hurry to comply with his emperor's orders and took his time getting underway.

While the Grand Army was just beginning to stir that morning, Schwarzenberg's army, under the field command of Wittgenstein, had been moving into attack positions since just before daybreak. This night movement and the early morning fog caused much confusion, especially on the Allied right wing. Gortschakoff's I Corps ended up far to the south of their starting position and Phalen's cavalry Division was too far west. Klenau's IV Corps on the east side of the University Copse was completely out of contact. These jumbled starting positions would have to do because the bombardment of the French lines had already begun, and to the surprise of the French, attack columns

between the Pleisse River and Galgenberg Heights appeared out of the rising mist.

Kleist's objective was Markkleeberg and its northern outskirts held by Poniatowski's Poles. Eugen's II Corps was to throw Victor's troops out of their positions in front of Galgenberg. Gortschakoff would attack Lauriston's V Corps at Liebertwolk from the south, while Klenau was to flank it from the east. Meerveldt's II Corps began its attack across the Pleisse River to gain a bridgehead.

As a result of the confused deployment of some units, the Allied attack was staggered and piecemeal. Gaps developed between the attacking formations and this invited counter-attack. But no counter-attack would be forthcoming because Napoleon refused to put his plan into action until Macdonald arrived. Macdonald and Sebastiani were still north of the battle, just moving out of Taucha.

#### *Game-Turn Two: Midmorning*

By nine o'clock, the battle still raged around the villages of Markkleeberg and Wachau, with both changing hands several times. At Liebertwolk, Lauriston decimated Gortschakoff's attack with his artillery and drove him off into the University Copse. To the east of these woods, Klenau still had not launched his attack on Lauriston's left and was nowhere to be seen. Meerveldt, between the two rivers, had some minor success in reaching his objectives until he ran into some of Poniatowski's troops and part of the Leipzig garrison, who stopped him.

At around ten o'clock, Kleist managed to hold on to Markkleeberg, but became pinned in doing so. Eugen and Victor continued to trade Wachau until losses forced Eugen to give up. These weak, but determined attacks gave Napoleon cause to call up the Guard to form behind Victor and Lauriston in case things got out of hand. He assigned Augereau's Corps to Poniatowski to keep the pressure off his right wing. Murat moved his three cavalry corps behind the Galgenberg Heights to be ready to support a counter-attack. But Napoleon continued to balk at the idea because Macdonald was still some distance away.

North of Leipzig, Marmont was just beginning to start his move south when, at ten o'clock, Blücher's advance guard made contact with him. Ney, who commanded this northern sector, ordered Marmont to turn around and take up positions at Mockern (0921) and the area to its northeast (0820, 0720). Knowing that Napoleon wanted at least one of his corps, Ney dispatched Bertrand's IV Corps to take what would have been Marmont's reserve station. Just as Bertrand moved off, General Arrighi, holding the French positions on the west side of the Elster River around Lindenau, reported to Ney that he was under heavy attack by the Austrians. This was Gyulai's III Corps attack on the Elster bridges. Since Bertrand's IV Corps was already moving in

that general direction, Ney ordered that it cross the causeway to the west side of the Elster River and assist Arrighi. Still feeling that Napoleon was expecting some reinforcements from his sector, Ney ordered the still incomplete III Corps, under Souham, south. The remainder of the III Corps consisted of General Delmas' 9th Division, which was far to the north escorting the army's vehicle train.

#### *Game-Turn Three: Early Afternoon*

By eleven o'clock, the steam had gone out of the Army of Bohemia's attack. Tsar Alexander insisted that Wittgenstein move up the Prussian Guards (8-4) and the Russian Guards (2x11-4) from Madgeborn (2912; the reinforcement chart should have these Russian Guard units arriving with Prussian Guard unit on the south edge of the map, and not the north edge). In addition to these forces, the Austrian infantry reserves across the river with Meerveldt were moved over the Pleisse to take up positions behind the Allied line. Klenau finally got his corps into action and took the Kolm Berg Heights (2107-2108). With Pehlan's cavalry (6-6) on his right flank, he began to make threatening moves on Liebertwolk.

Since the morning had already slipped away, Napoleon decided that it was now time to put his own plan into action, because Macdonald was now approaching the scene of the battle. Massing over 100 cannon on the Galgenberg Heights behind Victor and Lauriston, he hoped to blast a hole in the center of the Allied line. With Poniatowski, Augereau and Victor on the right wing; Mortier with two divisions of the Young Guard between Lauriston and Macdonald on the left; and Oudinot with the remainder of the Young Guard behind Victor, Napoleon planned to make a general advance. Macdonald would push Klenau off the Kolm Berg Heights and then on to the Allied rear. But the total success of this enveloping move depended upon the arrival of reinforcements from Ney. After the artillery on the Galgenberg Heights opened up the center of Wittgenstein's line, Murat's cavalry would charge through supported by infantry from the Guard. Combined with Macdonald's attack, such a move should sever the Allied right wing and destroy it.

But Ney's reinforcements were not yet heard from and no one had informed Napoleon that Blücher's main army was concentrating to the north of Leipzig instead of to the west or south, as had been anticipated. With his own attack beginning and no sign of Marmont or Bertrand, Napoleon had to be thinking about those two corps that he left to garrison Dresden.

By noon, the French attacks were moving forward and all along the front the Army of Bohemia slowly gave ground until they were forced back to their starting positions. Macdonald's flanking attack pushed Klenau off the Kolm Berg, but Sebastiani's cavalry was having trouble getting any headway

against Pahlen's horsemen near Klein Possna (1706).

Meanwhile, on the west side of the Elster River, Bertrand and Arrighi drove off Gyulai's Corps. But since the Austrians had not been routed, Bertrand kept his three divisions on the west bank for the remainder of the day.

#### *Game-Turn Four: Late Afternoon*

With intense pressure mounting all along the battlelines, Napoleon decided that now was the time to commit his Guard and cavalry. Having learned that two divisions of Souham's III Corps (8-4, 7-4) would be arriving momentarily, he ordered the massed artillery to step up its bombardment and with it went forward Murat's three cavalry corps (I, IV and V), plus the Guard cavalry. Poniatowski and Augereau attacked toward Crobern, while Macdonald at the opposite end of the line moved on Seiffertshayn (2106). At two o'clock, the victory seemed well in Napoleon's hands, if only Ney's reinforcements would arrive for the final tip of the balance.

But what happened to Souham's divisions? All morning Blucher, who was sure that there were significant French forces off to his northeast, was worried about his open northern flank and proceeded slowly against Marmont. Finally, at two o'clock, he was in position and launched Yorck's I Prussian Corps (6-4, 5-4, 3x8-4) and Langeron's Russian divisions (2x5-4, 2x6-4, 3x7-4) against Marmont and one of Poniatowski's divisions, the 27th (6-4). Marmont had his corps placed along a line from Mockern to Klein Widderitzsch, where the Polish division was stationed. When Blucher's attack began, Ney quickly had the two III Corps divisions on the way to Napoleon recalled. Seeing that the VI Corps easily repulsed Yorck's assault, Ney ordered the two divisions south again. All this marching and counter-marching consumed precious time and the troops vanishing energies.

Back on the southern front, the climax of Napoleon's offensive was occurring. Around 2:30, Murat's cavalry force cut deeply into the hole in the Allied center (2512). They pushed their way through to the outskirts of Crobern (2614), nearly overrunning Alexander's headquarters. Austrian and Russian reserve cavalry responded and a confused horse and artillery battle resulted. Finally, the French cavalry, unsupported by either additional cavalry or infantry, were driven out of the Allied rear by Russian and Prussian reserves. The decisive moment had come and gone, but it is believed that Napoleon was not there to witness it. As Murat's troopers were riding through the crumbling Allied front line, Napoleon became concerned about the sound of heavy fighting from Ney's sector. So, when the talent and wisdom of the French Captain was needed to exploit the most crucial moment of the battle, it was not present as Napoleon galloped off to the north.

What caught the French Emperor's ear was the south of Langeron's divisions driving the outnumbered 27th Division out of Klein and Gross Widderitzsch (0418-0518). Langeron was about to follow up with a flanking move against Eutrizsch (0917) when the third division of III Corps (8-4) entered the field (on hex 0117). Believing the French division to be a much larger force than it was, Langeron held his units back.

#### *Game-Turn Five: Early Evening*

On the southern battlefield, the Austrian reserve divisions, Grenadier and Dio Bianchi (2x12-4), joined the Allied right wing and, with Kleist, managed to counter-attack the French left. This action caused the whole French line to pull back to their starting positions and probably would have retreated farther had not Souham's two divisions arrived to halt the Austrians. General Meerveldt renewed his attacks across the Pleisse River, but was turned back and managed to get himself captured. This was the end of the fighting south of Leipzig for that day.

The fierce fighting that took place along Marmont's line that afternoon reached its climax when Yorck flung in his last reserves consisting mainly of cavalry. The Prussians' determination and the faint-heartedness of some of the French allies proved to be too much for the VI Corps. They hastily withdrew from Mockern around five o'clock with serious losses. This was the final action of the northern battle.

The battle of the 16th can hardly be called anything but a gruesome draw. The Allies lost close to 30,000 casualties and the French, about 5,000 less. South of Leipzig neither side made any ground gains, but in the north, Blucher had won a tactical victory over Ney.

#### *Game-Turns Seven through Eleven: October 17*

The unexpected arrival of Blucher from the north instead of from the west or south made Napoleon consider the prospects of withdrawal. Now that the northern retreat route was out of the question, the French could remain and fight; withdraw to the west; or attempt to negotiate a truce. A conference with Murat on the evening of the 16th confirmed that Schwarzenberg had been stung badly that day and might be sympathetic to discussions. Early the next morning, the captured Austrian general, Meerveldt, was given a parole to cross lines and start talks with Schwarzenberg. He was expected to return at the end of the day with the Allied reply. This was a mistake for Napoleon, for he spent the 17th waiting to hear from Meerveldt, who never returned, instead of taking positive action to extricate his army. Time was working against Napoleon and for the Allies.

In the Allied camp, Schwarzenberg knew that if he could keep the French penned up in Leipzig that 60,000 Allied reinforcements

would reach him by sundown. Blucher planned to undertake some minor operations on the 17th to strengthen his line. He hoped that Bernadotte would arrive with his 70,000 man Army of the North before Napoleon took any offensive action against him.

By dawn, Blucher began his assaults on Gohlis (1119) which was easily given up by the French with losses in both men and guns. When the French VII Corps (2x7-4, 8-4), commanded by Reynier, arrived Napoleon pulled all northern forces back below the Parthe stream (that stream which runs from Leipzig toward the northeast corner of the map). The state of exhaustion, the lack of provisions, and the questionable loyalty of the German troops gave Napoleon little desire to start any offensive action. He preferred to wait on the defensive for Meerveldt to return or for the Allies to move first and perhaps make a mistake. The Allies, knowing that reinforcements were on the way, rested and waited. Thus the day for decisive action by Napoleon to save what was left of his 1813 campaign passed quietly.

That evening and night Bennigsen, at the head of the Army of Poland (2x14-4, 12-4, 9-4) and Colledero's I Austrian Corps (2x10-4), joined Schwarzenberg. Bernadotte's army formed up on the left of Blucher that night. (Note: The Russian 21st, 24th, 26th and 27th Divisions belong to the Army of the North and should arrive on Game-Turn Twelve on hex 0108). These massive reinforcements made it clear to Napoleon that he should attempt to break contact and retreat.

#### *Game-Turns Thirteen through Seventeen: October 18*

Breaking contact was not easy, for the Allies had no intention of letting Napoleone slip away. Moving the army headquarters to Stotteritz (1613), Napoleon then went about shortening his lines. Poniatowski and Augereau were south of Leipzig; in the center, Victor and Lauriston around Probsthayda (1914); and Macdonald on the left with the Guard as reserve. To the north of Macdonald was Ney's command, consisting of the III, VI and VII Corps, holding the line along the Parthe stream. Bertrand's IV Corps was to move down the road to Markranstadt to secure a retreat route while some of the Guards held the bridges over the Elster River. (For exact unit placements, see the Third Day Scenario initial deployment chart.)

About eight o'clock that morning, the Allied Armies began to put pressure on the northern and southern French flanks. The French lines held fast in these areas until Bernadotte's Army began to move down the road from Taucha. At Paunsdorf (1212), several Saxon regiments from the VII Corps deserted to the Allies, causing the French to fall back as their center was pushed in. Heavy and confused fighting raged around Paunsdorf, Molkau (1412), and Zweinaundorf (1516), until the Imperial Guard cavalry

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U.S. victory network. Thus, Bahrain is useless for fulfilling Victory Conditions unless Az Zahran is garrisoned by a U.S. unit.

On game-Turn Eight, each oil facility/port hex in the U.S. Victory Point network and the transportation lines connecting them should be covered with an air unit unless already occupied by a ground unit. This is to thwart last ditch attempts at air interdiction by the Arab Player. It's embarrassing to have victory snatched away just because you forgot to cover your transportation lines with the numerous air units you have at your disposal.

#### ARAB TACTICS

Avoid stacking ground units unless they are in a SAM hex or forced to stack in order to get a sure kill on a U.S. ground unit. It takes the U.S. Player only two air units to kill two brigades stacked together. He must use four air units to kill the same two brigades if they are on separate hexes. This prohibition against stacking applies to Arab air units as well. It takes the U.S. more forces to kill two air units when they are on separate hexes than when they are stacked in the same hex. The protection given at SAM sites is illusory once the U.S. Player gets a decent number of aircraft. When Arab air strength is no longer enough for effective offensive action, the Arab Player should disperse his air units to make them as hard to kill as possible.

If the U.S. forces land at Riyadh, the Arab Player should hold two of his ground units in Dukhan until Turn Eight, then send them out to contest the oil facilities around hex 1424 or cut the transportation line at hex 1421. If he lands at Qatar, two Arab units should be held at Riyadh until Game-Turn Eight, then used to contest the oil facilities at hex 1125 or 1227 or to cut the transportation line at hex 0521. In either case, the mere presence of these Arab units on the U.S. Player's flank may cause him to send forces against them which he could put to better use in the push north or in garrison duty.

At the start of the game, the Arab Player should deploy the Kuwait Army along the Saudi Arabian border for rapid deployment south. In the First Game-Turn, a brigade starting in hex 0813 or 0914 can relieve the stronger Saudi unit protecting Az Zahran at hex 1420.

The single Qatar infantry brigade should be placed in hex 1922 "At Start." If the U.S. Player invades Qatar and doesn't destroy this brigade in Turn One, the Arab Player will be able to use it in concert with Saudi units in an encirclement. If the U.S. Player does attack the Qatar brigade, it means he has one less air landing unit available that Game-Turn for capturing an air base. And if the U.S. Player goes after the brigade with air units only, the best differential he can get is a +12, which still gives the Qatar brigade a one-third chance of survival. (NOTE: There is a typographical error in the "+12" column of the Combat Results Table. The result on line four should be "De," not "Dr.")

To minimize Arab losses when attacking U.S. air units, the following tactics should be used. Stack the two most valuable attacking units (e.g., the Iranian F-4's) in one of the adjacent hexes and place one other air unit (only) in each of the other five hexes which surround the target. When the attack is successful, the stacked aircraft are advanced into the target hex. They will be immune to effective counterattack, since there is only one empty hex from which they can be attacked. If the U.S. counterattacks any of the surrounding buffer units, he will be forced to stack in order to get a good differential.

Unless there is a chance to crush the U.S. initial invasion, Iranian "At Start" units are best used sitting on the SAM sites at Basra, Abadan and Ahvaz, waiting for the Marines. The Iraqis and excess Iranians should be sent south to help slow the U.S. advance. The existence of uncommitted Iranian and Iraqi ground reinforcements is usually enough to keep the intelligent U.S. Player from trying to pull anything cute in Iran or Iraq. For this reason, it is generally unwise to bring Iranian ground reinforcements on the map until the U.S. Player commits his reserve air landing units and his Marines. Remember that units not brought on the playing area can't be killed. Reinforcements brought into play prematurely are asking to be destroyed by the F-111's.

The Iranian and Iraqi air reinforcements are the Arab Player's ace-in-the-hole. It is possible to turn the game into a last minute Arab victory if the air reinforcements are withheld until Game-Turn Eight and then thrown *en masse* in a sort of Bedouin *Bondenplatte* against the transportation lines connecting the U.S.-occupied oil facilities. The U.S. Victory Condition supply path may not be traced through a hex occupied by an Enemy air unit.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that none of the above guidelines are absolute. As in any conflict, strategic and tactical considerations must be tempered by knowledge of one's opponent's skills and eccentricities. It is this personality factor which makes each game a unique challenge and prevents its deterioration into a pre-ordained set piece.

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and infantry stabilized the situation around sundown.

This third day's battle, while not as flowing or dramatic as that of the 16th, forced the French into a more desperate situation that made it imperative for the Grand Army to escape before it was crushed. For the Allies, the action on the 18th was not a total success by any means, but it did prevent Napoleon from retreating to safety.

### Game-Turns Eighteen through Twenty: October 19

During the night and early morning, Napoleon got most of his troops out of the east bank area, leaving only the VII, VIII and XI Corps as a rear guard. These three corps made up about 30,000 men, all of which were located on the edges of Leipzig. The key bridges across the Elster (between hexes 1318-1319) were garrisoned by two divisions of the Young Guard and mined for demolition once the rear guard was across.

It was not until ten o'clock that morning that the Allies began to make any serious attempt to stop the French, but by then just about all the Grand Army was safely over the Elster River. Suddenly, later in the morning (Game-Turn Twenty), a panicky Guard engineer set off the charges and blew up the bridges while troops were still crossing them. The rear guard, now stranded in Leipzig, became a confused mob trying to escape any way they could. Many tried to swim across the Elster, but were drowned, including Poniatowski. By the end of the day, what was left of the Grand Army was on its way to the Rhine and those units isolated in Leipzig surrendered. So, by the gradual attrition of the French, the Allies got their decisive victory and ended the 1813 campaign.

The four-day struggle cost the Allies almost 55,000 killed and wounded. They captured 300 French cannon. Napoleon lost well over 38,000 casualties and all three of the rear guard corps on the 19th. Six French generals were killed, twelve wounded, thirty-six became prisoners, including one King of Saxony. All of the French Empire east of the Rhine was lost as province after province defected to the Allies. After Leipzig, Napoleon was never to have the initiative again until his exile.

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