

Brussels or Bust!

Napoleon's Last Battles Quad (SPI) (designed by Kevin Zucker 1976)

Another look at an old favourite By Paul Sheppard

Welcome to the wonderful (gaming) world of Napoleon's Last Battles Quad. I was fortunate indeed to acquire a 1st edition copy of this quad back in 1980 and in terms of pure gaming pleasure, I've never looked back. SPI produced a number of these 'Quadrigames', a collection of four games with additional combinations therein whereby, in some cases, one or more of the folios could be combined to make yet another game. They were (and still are) good value, utilising a very simple but workable system (or so it seemed - see my comments later) that enabled you to re-enact some great moments in history. Napoleon's Last Battles Quad was one of these quads and what 'fun' it was, and still is!

Napoleon's Last Battles Quad came either in a box or grip-top (depending on your source of supply) with 400 die-cut counters, 4 maps and two sets of rules, one for the basic game system and the other covering special rules dealing with the Campaign game. It was attractive to look at and the counters used a variety of colours, light blue for the French, light green for the Prussians and a multitude of colours for the Anglo-Allies, which was useful in order to distinguish between the Netherlanders (Dutch-Belgians), the King's German Legion, the British etc. The rules were well written with no obvious errors or anomalies and within a short period of time, battle could commence.

Playing the games in the quad, you really can appreciate the full flow of the 3-day campaign that led to the muddy fields of Mont St Jean. 400 counters and 4 maps was all that was required. However, closer inspection led me to a number of questions as to why this or that folio or the Campaign game wasn't giving me a real sense of 'occasion'; indeed, I was conscious of merely operating a system rather than re-creating or re-writing history and as a military historian of many years prior to the purchase of the game, this began to grate.

Fortunately, a solution was at hand. Intense historical research, Moves magazine, Fire & Movement magazine, Phoenix magazine and some vigorous playtesting provided some of the answers. To me, the system 'didn't work' and whilst the rules offered the basis of a good idea, they didn't really 'do the job' as far as I was concerned.

So, I offer the following thoughts and suggestions as to how this game can be improved without detracting radically from either the historicity or the playability. I've been using my version of the system for many years and I can say without an intended trace of conceit, "it works!"

I will discuss my proposed game system changes in more detail when talking about the Campaign game. First, let's tackle the 4 folio games.

LIGNY

'Ligny' has the potential for being an exciting contest. One of the two pitched battles in NLB (the other being 'La Belle Alliance'), it offers players the chance to see whether the Prussians really can hold the (foolishly) forward position they occupied at the time of the battle.

However, in practice, 'Ligny' quickly degenerates into a sloggy match with French qualitative superiority the deciding factor. That is not to say that the Prussians cannot hold their position, rather that they are unlikely to, given the superior French deployment and opportunities. A softening-up from the 3rd and 4th Corps followed by an attack by the Imperial Guard is usually enough to demoralise the Prussians, as was the case historically.

The cardinal reason for 'Ligny's' failure as a portrayal of the actual battle are the boundaries of the map. It is rare for the top half of the map to be used at all due to the fact that most, if not all, of the action will take place to the south. More importantly, the western map-edge makes an attack on the Prussian right flank extremely difficult to carry out with any degree of success.

Also, the 'what-ifs' are not catered for, e.g. D'Erlon managing to deploy successfully prior to an attack on Wagnelee. In the same vein, what if Ney had managed to secure the crossroads at Quatre Bras and then turned east along the Namur road, straight into the rear of the Prussian position?

Furthermore, no mention is made of the panic on the French left wing at 1800 hours (when the sudden appearance of units of the French 1st Corps was mistaken for a Prussian attack) or the possibilities that

both Lobau's 6th Corps and/or Bulow's 4th Corps may have arrived to change the fortunes of their respective armies.

On the plus side, however, it has to be said that 'Ligny' is not boring to play. Indeed, it is a challenging enough folio for either player. The close proximity of the opposing sides forces both players to exercise a degree of tactical skill in manoeuvring their units.

Some of the shortcomings inherent in the folio can be overcome by introducing optional rules and I therefore offer the following on the basis that, as with almost all games, the introduction of such rules can take away some of the 'playability' of the game whilst enhancing the simulation aspects.

Note: For each suggested rule addition or change I have indicated the source of the idea in parentheses after the heading. Where 'PMS' is the indicated source, the idea is mine. Where 'PMS' appears in addition to another specified source, then I have adapted their suggestion(s) and modified them slightly. If I have mistakenly listed a source or omitted a source, I apologise. No offence is intended to any of the authors mentioned in the Bibliography and References.

Suggested Optional Rules

1. The Panic on the French left wing (PMS)

At 1800 hours, the 6 westernmost French units are subject to a die roll. Each unit affected must be thrown for separately. In the event of a choice of units being applicable, the Prussian player may decide which French units are eligible.

If a 5 or 6 is thrown, the unit is not affected.

If a 1, 2, 3 or 4 is thrown, the unit suffers an immediate AR2 and may not enter enemy ZOCs for the remainder of the 1800 turn.

If an affected unit is attacked, the Prussians can have a +2 modifier to the die roll in combat. This rule only applies to the 1800 turn.

2. D'Erlon's arrival on the French left wing (PMS)

At 1800 hours, the French player rolls a die.

If a 6 is rolled, then the French 1st Corps may be entered on the western map-edge south of hex 0119.

If any other number is rolled, the French 1st Corps does not enter the game at all.

Note that the French Panic rule applies irrespective of whether the French 1st Corps enters the game.

3. Introduction of the French 6th Corps (PMS)

Starting at 1400 hours, the French player rolls a die. This die roll will be made every turn until game-end.

If a 6 is rolled then one unit of the French 6th Corps may enter the game at hex 0334.

This rule is to allow for the possibility that, if the 6th Corps had appeared earlier in the battle, they would probably have been introduced piecemeal bearing in mind Napoleon's reluctance to commit his reserves and also as a reflection of the poor staff work which the French suffered from at the time.

Also, Napoleon's ambiguous orders to Ney and the fact that D'Erlon's 1st corps was marching to and fro between both battlefields to no effect probably made Ney's follow-up to Quatre Bras (assuming he was successful there) a non-event. However, players could at least try it as an optional rule.

4. Optional French reinforcements (PMS)

Allowing for the fact that most of the 2nd corps and the 3rd cavalry corps would have remained at Quatre Bras following a French success there (in order to cover against an Allied counter-attack) at 1800 hrs, the French player may roll a die.

The basis for this is that, if Ney had intervened, he would not have sent more than one corps eastwards. If he rolls a 6 on the die, he may introduce either 3 infantry units from the 2nd corps and 1 cavalry unit or 5 infantry units from the 1st corps and 1 cavalry unit, to the western map edge between hexes 0113 to 0118 (inclusive).

This optional rule could be used instead of the one that allows for the introduction of D'Erlon's corps to Ligny, as both rules could not be used in tandem. It also assumes that D'Erlon joined up with Ney for the assault on Quatre Bras.

All of the above suggestions would seem (with the exception of the French panic on the left wing) to give the French player a considerable advantage in addition to the benefits he enjoys already. To counter balance these rules, allow the Prussians to 'even' things up, as follows:-

EITHER

1. Ignore the lowering of the Prussian demoralisation rules for the French occupation of St. Amand and Ligny should options 2, 3, or 4 (see above) be used.

OR

2. At 1700 hrs, if the Prussian player rolls a 6 he may introduce the Prussian 4th corps at the eastern map edge at hex 2923.

Even then, the Prussian player may still be handicapped but the chances are he will be hard pushed to win anyway, so these suggested rules do little more than make 'Ligny' a more historical game than it is at present.

QUATRE BRAS

'Quatre Bras' has far greater possibilities than 'Ligny' as a game in that it appears to be more evenly balanced and potentially more exciting. However, even allowing for the French 1st corps not being used, the game almost always results in an overwhelming French victory. A holding force placed in the wood of Bossu, a flanking movement through Piraumont and Thyle by the cavalry and an all-out attack on Gemiancourt is usually sufficient for the French to batter the weaker Allied units into oblivion despite the argument that the position at Quatre Bras has good defensive possibilities for the Allied player.

This means that the historical result of a drawn battle (with overall strategic advantage to the Allies), Ney's ineptitude, piecemeal French attacks and Perponcher's clever delaying tactics south of Quatre Bras are almost impossible to re-create.

Furthermore, the introduction of Allied reinforcements is such that they are subject to being destroyed in detail almost as soon as they reach the Quatre Bras position; by which time, the French are usually deployed in sufficient numbers to launch a mass attack.

However, 'Quatre Bras' can be saved as a game and tailored more to historical fact by some restraints and allowances affecting both players as follows:-

Suggested Optional Rules

1. Ney's Command Effectiveness (PMS)

Each turn, the French player rolls a die. If he throws a 6, he may commit all of his forces to combat (i.e. enter enemy ZOCs). If not, he is limited to 3 infantry units and 1 cavalry unit. The artillery he can employ will be subject to a further die roll.

If he rolls a 5 or 6 he may use the 2nd corps artillery (6-4). If not, then he is limited to the 3rd cavalry corps horse artillery (2-6).

This is somewhat artificial and may not be the best way, but it does allow for the fact that Ney was often guilty of not committing all his available forces. As a result, the piecemeal nature of the French attacks allowed the Allies to form a defensive line at Quatre Bras, just enough (as it turned out), to hold the French at bay.

2. Sequence of Play (PMS)

In view of the rather obvious French first turn attacks and the predictable result of forcing the most forward Allied units back or knocking them down a step or two, try reversing the Sequence of Play to give the Allied player a chance to re-deploy these units.

Perponcher's tactics of deceiving the French into believing that he was stronger than he actually was will at least be given some credit in that the two units in question (plus Van Opstal's artillery) may then survive even at the expense of giving the French greater space to deploy for the assault on Quatre Bras.

This latter fact may in turn be compensated for by the Allied reinforcements moving up before the French gain too much in terms of 'tempo'.

When all is said and done, 'Quatre Bras' is still an exciting game and due to the low counter density, is ideal for learning the Basic game before tackling one of the other folios or the Campaign game. Players who do not attempt a more even balance to the folio, be warned; the French usually have it their own way!

WAVRE

'Wavre' is a rather odd game or to put it another way, it's not really much of a game at all. Obviously, it was a crucial part of the campaign in that the French failed to prevent the Prussians from interceding on Wellington's behalf at Waterloo but it doesn't amount to very much in game terms.

In 'Wavre', the Prussian player moves his units as quickly as possible to the specified exiting hexes on the western map edge to gain victory points, leaving only a small delaying force which he attempts to exit at the last moment. There's little for the French player to do in the circumstances.

In effect, the French player assumes the 'Grouchy handicap'. He's late getting started, and even when he gets going there's little he can do. A battle can be initiated at Wavre but little can be done to stop the majority of Prussian units exiting the map. What is more infuriating is that it is unlikely that the French 4th corps will ever see any action at all given that they are so far away from the Prussians in the first place.

'Wavre' therefore, is disappointing and in terms of game satisfaction ranks the lowest compared to the other folios in NLB. However, the strategic situation as it existed on the 18th June does just about redeem it from the ranks of 'only to be played in desperation' games which occur in most player's collections.

The question to be answered is, how much of the Prussian army can be forced to remain on the map and for how long? As the folio special rules exist at present, the answer to those questions is 'not much' (if any) and not for long, respectively.

Suggested Optional Rules

1. Increased French Turn 1 movement (PMS)

EITHER

Double the French movement allowance on Turn 1

OR

Make the doubling of French movement allowance on Turn 1 subject to a die roll

4,5,6 French 1st turn movement doubled

1,2,3 French 1st turn movement stays as it is

Alternatively, increase the chances of doubling the French 1st turn movement by making the die roll more favourable to such a result.

Note: If you don't apply this rule or something similar then the French simply won't catch up.

Result: end of battle, end of game.

2. Prussians stay and fight (PMS)

No Prussian units can exit the map. The French player does not get VPs for this.

3. Extension of French exiting hexes (PMS)

Extend the exiting hexes on the western map edge to 0120 (French only).

With a little effort, 'Wavre' can be made into a game even if the optional rules you choose to introduce are somewhat artificial. My advice though is that the other 3 folios offer far more interest and 'Wavre' is only really worth playing if you are determined to play all four folios in the quad.

LA BELLE ALLIANCE

If there are questions to be asked of the other three folios in terms of historical accuracy and how well they 'play', then rest assured that there is at least one 'star' in the quad. As a game, 'La Belle Alliance' is excellent, a worthy successor to SPI's 'Napoleon at Waterloo'. It has all the ingredients of the other three folios without the flaws (bar one which I will discuss later) and is tense and exciting to the bitter end.

What is even more interesting about 'La Belle Alliance' is that it is a pretty fair simulation of the battle of Waterloo anyway, but without the complications of a 'Wellington' Victory' in terms of playing time required and complexity.

The one gripe I have with it is that only the Prussian 4th corps is shown as being available to enter as Allied reinforcements. What is more, the entry time for this corps is spread over 3 turns, which doesn't allow the game to proceed as historical fact. I suggest the following rule in order to re-dress the situation:-

Suggested Optional Rules

1. Prussian reinforcements (PMS)

Prussian units	Entry hex	Game turn entry
4 th corps	B2912	1300
2 nd corps	B2914	1400
1 st corps	B2909	1500

This rule ensures that the Prussian corps come on as they did historically, that all 3 corps have a chance of engaging the French (the Prussian 1st corps are the only ones who may not make it) and their entry is sufficient to force the French (who outnumber Wellington's forces 3 to 2) to give more than just a passing nod to their right flank.

If the Prussian 1st and 2nd corps are introduced at the strength point values as indicated on the Wavre map, then introducing them will be even more faithful to history as both these two corps suffered heavily at Ligny and some allowance must be made for this, even though both corps survived relatively intact to fight at Waterloo.

2. Prussian 1st corps entry (PMS)

As the Prussian 1st corps entered along the Ohain road, they caused some confusion to the Anglo-Allied left wing and shots were exchanged. To simulate this, when the most advanced Prussian unit is within 2 hexes of the easternmost Anglo-Allied unit, roll a die.

5 or 6 the 3 easternmost Anglo-Allied units and the 3 most advanced Prussian units of the 1st corps suffer an automatic AR1 or AR2 (as you wish).

Alternatively, make this rule affect Prussian units of any corps within 2 hexes.

Or, apply the ruling to either the Prussians or the Anglo-Allies.

Even if you don't introduce optional rules, 'La Belle Alliance' remains a very good game in itself. Despite the initial French superiority it has been known in my experience for the Anglo-Allies to hold their position long enough for the Prussians to have an effect on the outcome.

It would certainly unbalance the game to have an option to allow for the possibility of Grouchy turning up and the likelihood of this happening was remote anyway. Therefore, I have not suggested such a rule.

In conclusion, the four folio games are varied and despite their idiosyncrasies, are always interesting. I do suggest that improvements can be made however, which will improve them without taking away their basic integrity. If nothing else, they are good practice for the Campaign game.

THE CAMPAIGN GAME

It is certainly true that whatever lack of excitement is inherent in the folio games is more than compensated for by the Campaign Game.

The game itself is long (36 turns) but never dull. Certainly it takes more than one session to complete (unless you have a weekend to spare) but it's worth any amount of effort to see it through. You may not get a 'Waterloo' out of it but the likelihood is that not all will be decided in the first two days.

What you do get is a campaign of manoeuvre and counter manoeuvre, the chance of more than a couple of pitched battles and use of the whole map rather than just a part of it.

The four folio maps are joined together to form the campaign map and unless you purchase a second copy of the game or buy the folios as individual games, you may as well join the maps together as it doesn't prevent you playing any one of the folios separately, once the four maps are assembled.

Some cosmetic alterations will enhance the visual appearance of the assembled map. I shaded all of the town hexes with red crayon and the marsh hexes with blue crayon in order to make them stand out as the set up hexes of the units of the four folios are printed on the four maps and in some cases unit deployment and town representation can become blurred, e.g. as on the 'La Belle Alliance' map.

I also covered the assembled map with transpaseal (available from any good stationers) which will ensure that your campaign map survives more than a few playing sessions.

In terms of the game itself I strongly recommend the following additional and/or changed rules. As I have introduced step reduction (i.e., in battle, units lose a step first before they are eliminated) these rules reflect this. As I disagree strongly with the idea of 'surround and destroy' (as per the original game system) I had to devise some way of portraying the campaign using a more historical 'feel' than exists in the game as it stands.

Some further words on the 'step reduction' idea. If you wish to go down this road you may need a brand new counter mix. Copious hours of research (Scott Bowden's book 'Armies at Waterloo' is an essential source here) produced some variations to the existing counter mix and slight variations to the initial set up. Suffice to say that my research and 'twiddling' has increased the French st pt total to 294 (instead of 290), reduced the Prussian st pt total to 202 (instead of 209) and increased the Anglo-Allied st pt total to 140 (instead of 130). These changes do not really affect the play balance as the differences are more cosmetic than anything else but at least my unit manifest is now more accurate with one or two additional units, where required, to reflect the actual order of battle.

For each counter there is a reverse side (exception: there are some 1-4, 1-7 units etc.), which shows a reduced strength, e.g. a 5-4 reduces to a 3-4. I have applied my own ruling here; normally an infantry or artillery unit would reduce 2 st pts, a cavalry or horse artillery unit 1 st pt. In addition, to incorporate this concept I designed a totally 'new' Combat Results table, some of which reflects a set of 'Exchanges' which can affect both forces without destroying the original basis of the 'Napoleon at Waterloo' system whereby an attack at 3:1 or greater is likely to be more favourable to the attacker than initiation of combat at 2:1 odds or less. Coupled to this, I have introduced a revised table giving plusses, minuses or CRT column shifts depending on certain circumstances. Also, I have incorporated the idea of 'Blown' cavalry whereby, following an attack, a cavalry unit cannot be expected to 'charge' around all over the place without some allowance for tired horses. 'Blown' cavalry can be 'recovered' the following turn. [This is an idea also used in GDW'S '1815']

Other rules give the leaders more 'character' reflecting some of the individual actions and reactions that were part of the campaign, e.g. Ney's command effectiveness and the introduction of Gneisenau as an additional Prussian leader. I don't claim complete originality for some of the following changes (see bibliography and references) and I am grateful to the authors of the articles I have accessed and 'borrowed' from when compiling these changes. However, what I will claim originality to is the way I have adapted and used some of their ideas and combined them with my own, particularly the new CRT, which is from me and me alone.

I recommend that players use all Optional rules as offered within the Standard Rules.

Suggested changes to the rules (Campaign game)

The following rules are further enhancements in addition to changing the whole rule structure and content to allow for unit step reduction. I refer players to the full set of Campaign rules I have prepared (see end of article for details) which can also be adapted in order to play the folios.

Note that I have not applied a numbering convention to these suggestions as players may wish to include them as add-ons or devise their numbering system.

FRENCH SPECIAL RULES

NAPOLEON'S COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS (Moves #31)

Roll a die immediately prior to the Command segment each turn on the daylight hours of the 17th and 18th.

NAPOLEON'S COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS			
June 17th		June 18th	
Die roll	Command capacity	Die roll	Command capacity
1, 2, 3	2	1, 2	1
4, 5, 6	3	3, 4	2
		5, 6	3

NEY'S COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS (PMS)

A special rule to allow for his lack of effectiveness in conducting operations.

NEYS' COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS	
On the daylight turns of the 16th (1400 – 1900), the following minimum die roll is needed for NEY to be able to exercise command If the die roll is successful, NEY can exercise full command thereafter and does not need to check for command effectiveness again	
1400	6
1500	6
1600	5
1700	4
1800	3
1900	2
2000	NEY has full command capacity
Ignore this rule if NAPOLEON is within 5 hexes of NEY during the command phase	

GROUCHY'S MOVEMENT LIMITATION (PMS)

Grouchy is confined to the 'Ligny' map on the daylight turns of the 16th until or unless the Prussian army is demoralised.

PRUSSIAN SPECIAL RULES

BLUCHER'S MOVEMENT LIMITATION (PMS)

A maximum of 3 hexes of any type per turn ('Ligny' map only) until either the Prussian army reaches demoralisation level or 2100 hrs on the 16th, whichever comes first.

GNEISENAU (Phoenix #20)

Gneisenau starts the game within 5 hexes of Blucher and must keep within this radius in order to function as a commander. If Blucher is killed, Gneisenau functions as a normal commander in all respects.

BULOW AND THE 4TH CORPS (Moves #31, PMS)

Bulow may transmit command control to units of the 4th Corps (only), at a radius of 3 hexes. He therefore acts as a commander in this respect.

All units of the 4th Corps may move at full speed during night turns.

Units of the 4th Corps do not have to pay the movement penalty for being 'out of command'.

RAIN TURNS (Moves #31)

Ignore the turns marked 'Rain' marked on the turn record track and use the following table instead.

RAIN					
For each Rain turn, roll a die					
-1	CLEAR	4	RAIN	If Clear last turn	-2 from die roll
0	CLEAR	5	RAIN	If Cloud last turn	+1 to die roll
1	CLEAR	6	RAIN	If Rain last turn	+2 to die roll

2	CLOUD	7	RAIN		
3	CLOUD	8	RAIN		

SUPPLY (Campaign Rules, PMS)

Enemy units 'in command', ZOCs of enemy units 'in command' and unbridged river hexsides block the line of supply provided the blocking units are still 'in command' at the end of their movement.

Units 'out of supply' automatically lose 1 step. Units already 1 step down are eliminated.

MOVEMENT

ZONES OF CONTROL (PMS)

Cavalry and Horse Artillery may ignore enemy ZOCs if the enemy unit is adjacent to a friendly combat unit (thus 'pinning' the enemy unit) unless the Cavalry or Horse Artillery start out in an enemy ZOC.

Cavalry and Horse Artillery units moving through ZOCs of 'pinned' enemy units pay +1MP for each such enemy ZOC they pass through.

REINFORCEMENTS

HOW REINFORCEMENTS ENTER THE MAP (Moves #31, PMS)

All reinforcements are subject to a variable turn of entry. Use the Variable Reinforcement Table at the times specified on the sequence of play. All die rolls should be kept secret and the unit's turn of entry recorded on the Variable Reinforcement Charts (I have copies if required).

VARIABLE REINFORCEMENT TABLE											
Roll two dice for each single unit or officer											
Dice roll	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Result	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0	0	+1	+1	+2	+2
Result determines whether unit/officer enters ahead of appointed time In advance [(-) turns] or delayed [(+) turns]											

COMBAT (PMS)

Use the following Combat Results table (if applying the concept of step reduction):-

COMBAT RESULTS TABLE

Odds	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	6:1
Die roll									
-2	AE2	AE2	AE2	AR2	AR2	AR2	AR1	AE1/ DE1	DR1/ DE1
-1	AE2	AE2	AE1/ AR2	AR2	AR2	AR1	AR1/ DE1	AE1/ DE1	DR1/ DE1
0	AE2	AE1/ AR2	AE1/ AR1	AR1	AR1	AE1/ DR1	AE1/ DE1	DE1	DR1/ DE1
1	AE1/ AR2	AE1/ AR2	AE1	AR1	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	AE1/ DE1	DE1	DR1/ DE1
2	AE1/ AR2	AE1/ AR1	AR2	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	AE1/ DE1	DR1	DE1	DR2/ DE1
3	AE1/ AR2	AE1/ AR1	AR1	AE1/ DR1	AE1/ DE1	AE1/ DE1	DR2	DE1	DR2/ DE1
4	AE1/ AR1	AE1	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	AE1/ DE1	DR2	DR2	DR1/ DE1	DR2/ DE1
5	AE1/ AR1	AE1	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	DR1	DR2	DE1	DR1/ DE1	DR2/ DE1
6	AE1/ AR1	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	DR1	DR1	DE1	DE1	DR2/ DE1	DE2
7	AE1	AE1/ DR1	AR1/ DE1	DR1	DR2	DR1/ DE1	DR1/ DE1	DR2/ DE1	DE2
8	AE1	AR1/ DE1	DR1	DR2	DR2	DR2/ DE1	DR2/ DE1	DE2	DE2
9	AE1	DR1	DR1	DR2	DE1	DE2	DE2	DE2	DE2

Attacks at less than 1:4 are not allowed (no column shifts may go lower)

Attacks at greater than 6:1 to be treated as 6:1 (no column shifts may go higher)

Units may not therefore enter an enemy ZOC if they cannot attack at 1:4 odds or higher

Voluntary reduction of combat odds is permitted

Explanation of Combat Results (PMS)

AE2	All Attacking units eliminated
AE1/AR2	All Attacking units lose 1 step and retreat 2 hexes
AE1/AR1	All Attacking units lose 1 step and retreat 1 hex
AE1	All Attacking units lose 1 step
AR2	All Attacking units retreat 2 hexes
AR1	All Attacking units retreat 1 hex
AE1/DR1	One Defending unit retreats 1 hex One of Attacking units must lose 1 step
AR1/DE1	One of Defending units must lose 1 step One Attacking unit retreats 1 hex
AE1/DE1	All Defending units lose 1 step Attacker loses equivalent in strength points via step reduction
DR1	All Defending units retreat 1 hex
DR2	All Defending units retreat 2 hexes
DE1	All Defending units lose 1 step
DR1/DE1	All Defending units lose 1 step and retreat 1 hex
DR2/DE1	All Defending units lose 1 step and retreat 2 hexes
DE2	All Defending units eliminated

COMBAT TABLE MODIFIERS (Moves #31, PMS)

-4	ALL DEFENDING UNITS UNDER ATTACK ARE IN CHATEAUX	
-3	ALL DEFENDING UNITS UNDER ATTACK ARE IN TOWNS	
-3	ALL DEFENDING UNITS UNDER ATTACK ARE BEING ATTACKED EXCLUSIVELY ACROSS STREAMS AND/OR BRIDGES	*****
-3	PART OF DEFENDING FORCE UNDER ATTACK IS IN CHATEAUX	
-2	PART OF DEFENDING FORCE UNDER ATTACK IS IN TOWN	
-2	PART OF DEFENDING FORCE UNDER ATTACK IS BEING ATTACKED ACROSS STREAMS AND/OR BRIDGES	*****
-2	CAVALRY ON THEIR OWN ATTACK INFANTRY ON THEIR OWN	*****
-2	IF DEFENDING UNITS ATTACKED EXCLUSIVELY ACROSS A CREST HEXSIDE	*****
-2	IF ANY ATTACKING UNITS ARE DEMORALISED	*****
-1	DEFENDING UNITS UNDER ATTACK INCLUDE ARTILLERY	*****
-1	IF ANY OF ATTACKING UNITS HAVE LOST ONE STEP	*****
-1	*IF ANY FRENCH UNITS HAVE EXITED THE MAP FROM HEX B0605 (IF FRENCH ARE DEFENDING)	*****
SHIFTS TO CRT		
2 CoIs to left	IF ATTACKING UNITS ARE ANGLO-ALLIES AND WELLINGTON IS DEAD	*****
2 CoIs to left	IF ATTACKING UNITS ARE PRUSSIAN AND BLUCHER IS DEAD	*****
1 Col to right	IF AT LEAST ONE INFANTRY, ONE CAVALRY AND ONE ARTILLERY/HORSE ARTILLERY UNIT ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE SAME ATTACK (ARTILLERY DOES NOT HAVE TO BE ADJACENT)	*****
1 Col to right	IF DEFENDING UNITS ARE ANGLO-ALLIES AND WELLINGTON IS DEAD	
1 Col to right	IF DEFENDING UNITS ARE PRUSSIAN AND BLUCHER IS DEAD	
+1	*IF ANY FRENCH UNITS HAVE EXITED THE MAP FROM HEX B0605 (IF ANGLO-ALLIES ARE DEFENDING)	*****
+1	IF ANY OF DEFENDING UNITS HAVE LOST ONE STEP	
+1	IF ANY OF DEFENDING UNITS ARE 'BLOWN' CAVALRY	
+1	IF ANY OF DEFENDING UNITS ARE DEMORALISED	
+1	IF GROUCHY, NEY, ORANGE, BLUCHER OR GNEISENAU ARE WITHIN 5 HEXES OF POINT OF CONTACT (NOT CUMULATIVE)	*****
+1	IF ANY FRENCH UNIT IS INVOLVED IN AN ATTACK NORTH OF THE NAMUR ROAD BETWEEN 1400-2000 HRS (INC) ON THE 16TH (ONLY)	*****
+1	FRENCH PLAYER USES 3 OR MORE UNITS OF A CORPS IN AN ATTACK	*****
+1	ANGLO-ALLIED PLAYER USES 3 OR MORE UNITS OF A DIVISION IN AN ATTACK	*****
+1	PRUSSIAN PLAYER USES 5 OR MORE UNITS OF A CORPS IN AN ATTACK	*****
+2	FOR ATTACKING FRENCH IF NAPOLEON IS WITHIN 5 HEXES OF POINT OF CONTACT	*****
+2	FOR ATTACKING ANGLO-ALLIES IF WELLINGTON IS WITHIN 5 HEXES OF POINT OF CONTACT	*****

***** Does not apply if attacking unit(s) are solely bombarding artillery

* Campaign game only

ALLIED RELIABILITY (Moves #31)

Whenever a non-British or non-KGL unit is attacked, roll a die.

1,2 or 3 Unit defends at half-strength (round up fractions).

Halving is cumulative to other penalties but no unit may be reduced to less than 1 strength point.

4,5, or 6 Unit defends at normal strength.

Whenever a non-British or non-KGL unit makes an attack, roll a die.

1,2 or 3 Unit does not add its strength to the attack.

4,5, or 6 Unit may attack normally.

In both attack and defence, Allied units are not subject to reliability checks if stacked with or adjacent to a British or KGL unit.

RESULTS OF COMBAT

RETREATS (PMS)

Units which have to retreat into enemy ZOCs (if no other path of retreat is open) each lose 1 step for each enemy ZOC passed through. These ZOCs are counted in terms of hexes, not units.

ADVANCE AFTER COMBAT (Campaign Rules, PMS)

Cavalry units always advance in preference to other units.

One friendly combat unit in a hex adjacent to the advancing units, provided it is not in an enemy ZOC, may enter the hex vacated by the advancing unit. This is done immediately after the advance after combat has been made.

Of the two Artillery types, only Horse Artillery may advance after combat.

'BLOWN' CAVALRY (F+M#3, PMS)

After a cavalry attack, the cavalry unit becomes 'blown' for the whole of the following turn. This applies irrespective of whether the attack was made in conjunction with other unit types.

Such units may attack in the following turn whilst 'blown' but halve movement and combat strength (rounding fractions up). If attacked while 'blown' solely by cavalry and/or horse artillery, 'blown' cavalry defend at half-strength (round fractions up). Normal movement and combat rates apply again the turn after the turn in which they became 'blown'.

DEMORALISATION

EFFECTS OF DEMORALISATION (PMS)

No advance after combat is permitted.

DR1 becomes DR2	DR2 becomes DR3
AR1 becomes AR2	AR2 becomes AR3

Exchanges containing 'DR' and 'AR' and 'E' results are not affected.

FRENCH IMPERIAL GUARD (Campaign Rules, PMS)

If any infantry unit of the Imperial Guard suffers an AR1 or AR2 result, all French corps within 10 hexes of the 'Guard occupied hex' immediately reduce their demoralisation levels by 7. French Cavalry Corps are not affected by this rule. Exchange results containing AR1 or AR2 have no effect in this case.

ARMY DEMORALISATION AND DISINTEGRATION (Moves #48, PMS)

There is no Anglo-Allied Army demoralisation on the 16th.

If either the Prussians or Anglo-Allies become disintegrated, the French can shift the CRT 1 column to the right when using Automatic Victory against whichever army has reached Disintegration level. Therefore, in this case, a 9:1 is sufficient. This shift is in addition to any other effects.

If the Anglo-Allied army reaches Disintegration level, roll a die for each non-British and non-KGL unit that is not adjacent to or stacked with a British or KGL unit. A 4, 5 or 6 and the unit is eliminated. Such units may not be reorganised.

This rule also applies to all Leaders and units due to enter as reinforcements. The die-roll is made each turn for each unit as long as the army remains at Disintegration level.

MODIFICATIONS TO ARMY DEMORALISATION LEVELS (Moves #48, PMS)

Bulow is not affected by Prussian army demoralisation or disintegration unless it happens after the Bulow leader counter has appeared on the map.

VICTORY CONDITIONS (Campaign Rules, PMS)

There are three ways the French player can win:-

- A. If the VP total reaches 230 or more at any time.
- B. If both Wellington and Blucher are eliminated.
- C. If both the Prussian and Anglo-Allied armies reach Disintegration level.

There are three ways the Allied player can win:-

- A. If the VP total does not reach 230 by the end of the game.
- B. If Napoleon is eliminated.
- C. If the French army reaches Demoralisation level.

These changes mean some adaptation to the sequence of play.
I suggest the following:-

16 th		17 th		18 th	
1.0	Variable Reinforcement table 1400 hrs for 16th 2100 hrs for 17th	1.0	Variable Reinforcement table 2100 hrs for 18th – Prussians 2100 hrs for 18th – Anglo-Allies	1.0	Player discussion – 0900 hrs
2.0	Player discussion – 1400 hrs	2.0	Player discussion – 0900 hrs	2.0	Remove 'Blown' markers
3.0	Remove 'Blown' markers	3.0	Remove 'Blown' markers	3.0	Weather 0900 – 1000 hrs
4.0	Command status - NEY	4.0	Weather 1500 – 2000 hrs	4.0	Supply status 0900 hrs
5.0	Reorganisation	5.0	Supply status 0900 hrs	5.0	French late start
6.0	Movement Reinforcements Blucher / Grouchy	6.0	French late start	6.0	Napoleon's Command Effectiveness
7.0	Allied Reliability	7.0	Napoleon's Command Effectiveness	7.0	Command status
8.0	Combat status	8.0	Command status	8.0	Reorganisation
9.0	Mark 'Blown' cavalry	9.0	Reorganisation	9.0	Movement
10.0	Resolve combats	10.0	Movement Reinforcements	10.0	Allied Reliability
11.0	Advance and Retreat	11.0	Allied Reliability	11.0	Combat status
12.0	Demoralisation levels	12.0	Combat status	12.0	Mark 'Blown' cavalry
		13.0	Mark 'Blown' cavalry	13.0	Resolve combats
		14.0	Resolve combats	14.0	Advance and Retreat
		15.0	Advance and Retreat	15.0	Demoralisation levels
		16.0	Demoralisation levels		

Player discussion will only apply when there are three or more players.

There are two further variants that can be played. In Moves #31 Christopher Perleberg suggested both a 'Grand Waterloo' and 'Extended Campaign'. For 'Grand Waterloo', use the following rules (these are essentially Christopher's ideas plus some 'tweaking' of my own):-

Grand Waterloo - Scenario rules

1.0 SET UP (Moves #31)

For this scenario, use the Wavre and La Belle Alliance maps combined.
The set up uses the Wavre and La Belle Alliance start positions.
The Leader 'Brunswick' is not deployed.

2.0 PRUSSIAN MOVEMENT (PMS)

Pirch's II corps may treble their movement allowance on Turn 1200 and double their movement on Turn 1300.
The Prussian 3rd corps units and the leader 'Gneisenau' are not permitted to move off the Wavre map.

Quite simply, without such a rule, Pirch will never make it to the Waterloo battlefield (which he managed to do, historically).

3.0 EXITING THE MAP (Moves #31)

Units may exit the map at any time.
French Southern map edge
Anglo-Allies B0605
Prussians Eastern map edge

Units exited do not count towards Demoralisation levels nor may they return to the game.

Grand Waterloo - VICTORY CONDITIONS (Moves #31, PMS)

French Demoralisation	75
Anglo-Allied Demoralisation	45
Anglo-Allied Disintegration	50
Prussian Demoralisation	45
Prussian Disintegration	60

Additional Morale Effects to Army Levels (Moves #31)

Army	Factor	Cause
French	+10	If either the Prussians or Anglo-Allies are demoralised (allowed only once per army)
	+10	If any unit under Grouchy's command (at start) engages any Anglo-Allied unit
	-20	If any Prussian or Anglo-Allied unit enters Maison du Roi
Prussian	-10	If the Anglo-Allies become demoralised
Anglo-Allies	+10	If the Prussians engage in combat with any French unit on the La Belle Alliance map.
	-10	If the Prussians become demoralised
	-20	If any French unit enters any Waterloo hex

French Victory: Both the Prussians and the Anglo-Allies become demoralised OR the Anglo-Allies become disintegrated

Allied Victory: The French become demoralised or the leader 'Napoleon' is eliminated

For the Extended Campaign, start at 0900 hrs on the 16th.

The set up for this variant is somewhat different from the Campaign game and readers will have to email me for the details unless they wish to use Christopher Perleberg's article in Moves #31.

All other rules are as per the Campaign game.

From experience, I've found the Extended Campaign to be even more interesting as it allows players more variation in their deployment and it can be quite a different game as a result.

Final Thoughts

There are some obvious questions to answer with the changes I have proposed.

- 1. Do these changes upset the play balance?**
Well, I've played the campaign at least half a dozen times with differing results so I would have to say 'No'. The system I play really does put more emphasis on the player's skill, rather than the need to continually try and avoid Exchanges or have to 'surround and destroy, as per the original game system.
Secondly, both players need not fear frontal assaults provided they are prepared for the attrition which can result. After all, there were more instances of strategic flanking movements in the Napoleonic wars than tactical flanking movements, as encouraged by the exiting game system.
- 2. What about the increased complexity? Is the game 'playable' as a result?**
Definitely 'Yes'. Granted, my rules do increase the complexity but my fellow players and I were unanimous in our agreement that it 'feels' more like a Napoleonic wargame. Also, you really can enjoy the strategic challenges on offer, whichever force you command.
If there are 3 or 4 of you playing, this adds another level altogether, with couriers, player discussion, mutual nail-biting etc.
- 3. Do I need to apply the changes in full?**
No, of course not. Readers are completely free to choose one, some or none of the proposals to enhance their version of the game. All I will say is that I play using this modified system and it works splendidly. If you do not want to take some of the ideas on board then I am 100% for your freedom of choice in this respect.
- 4. Isn't this a lot of work for what is really, a very basic game?**
Yes, but if you want to keep things simple, try Ludo. You're trying to recreate the campaign and battle of Waterloo, not merely push a few counters about. This game deserves not only a closer look but it is one of the few that rewards the effort you put in. Give it some concentrated playtesting. If you

really want to get 'complex', then I suggest you get a copy of 'Wellington's Victory (a superbly detailed and intricate tactical game of the battle). If you want to get a 'feel' of what went on, play this game but I do suggest you include some changes to get more from it.

There is a great game hiding in the Napoleon's Last Battles Quad. Even with some of my proposed changes it doesn't take a lifetime to play, it doesn't take hours to set it up and it really conveys some of the excitement and danger of the campaign and individual battles. Full marks to Kevin Zucker, the designer, for the original idea and I wish you happy gaming!

Anyone who wants a copy of my version of the Campaign Rules, Orders of Battle, set up details etc., should email me at paulsheppard@msn.com and they are welcome to a copy!
IMPORTANT: YOU WILL NEED WINZIP INSTALLED ON YOUR PC TO ACCESS THE FILES AND PREFERABLY OFFICE 2000 OR A MORE RECENT VERSION.
Better still, if you live within striking distance, let's have a game!.

Bibliography and References

Historical Research

There are numerous works on the both the campaign and the battle as we know, but I found the following to be of specific use when researching the background to the changes I have made:-

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
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[Empire Press 1983]
A primary source for research with an amazingly detailed order of battle for all the armies and nationalities involved. |
| V.J.Esposito and
J.R.Etling | A Military History and Atlas of the Napoleonic Wars
[Greenhill Books 1964]
Intricate and detailed maps – an essential purchase for anyone interested in the campaign or the Napoleonic Wars in general. |
| G.E.Rothenburg | The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon
[Spellmount Limited 1997]
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| Lord Chalfont (ed) | Waterloo – Battle of Three Armies
[Sidgwick and Jackson 1979]
Three different perspectives on the campaign; recommended. |

Gaming Magazines

Any rule amendments have been, *in some instances*, 'borrowed' and adapted from the following articles on 'Napoleon's Last Battles Quad'.

BATTLEPLAN Magazine

Battleplan #2

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CAMPAIGN Magazine

Campaign #77

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Campaign #78

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F&M #40

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Phoenix #17

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S&T #42

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S&T #125

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Wargamer Vol.1 #4

Spotlight: Games on Waterloo: Chris Hunt (Review)

Wargamer Vol.1 #12

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Napoleon's Last Battles: James Istvanffy (Analysis)