

# BONAPARTE, PREMIER CONSUL ET GÉNÉRAL, ET SON TRIOMPHE À MARENGO

UN JEU ORIGINAL SUR LA GLORIEUSE BATAILLE DU 14 JUIN 1800, CRÉÉ POUR HISTOGAME PAR B. SIMMONS

A GAME FOR 2 PLAYERS BY BOWEN SIMMONS



Northern Italy, 1800, during the War of the Second Coalition: Surprised by the Austrian advance toward Genoa in mid-April, Bonaparte responded quickly with a brilliant crossing of the Alps through the Great St. Bernard Pass in mid-May. After cutting the Austrian line of communications by defeating General Ott at Montebello on 9 June, the French closed in on the Austrian army under General Melas, which had massed in Alessandria. However, deceived by a local double agent, Bonaparte detached considerable forces. On 14 June, Melas launched an early morning surprise attack.

The Austrian assaults against the French center at Marengo grew in strength all morning as the local French forces there scrambled to respond. But it was only at 10:00 am that Bonaparte realized the full danger he was facing, and recalled his recently detached forces, including that of General Desaix, who had already taken the initiative by marching towards the sound of guns. Meanwhile, the Austrian left had taken Castelceriolo and, after renewing their main assault, they finally broke the

central French position. By 2:30 pm the French were withdrawing steadily eastward toward San Giuliano Vecchio. With the French outnumbered and driven from their best defensive position, the battle seemed to be won by the Austrians. Melas, 71 years old and slightly wounded, handed over command to his chief-of-staff to pursue the “fleeing” French.

However, Desaix’s arrival around 5:30 pm stabilized the French position north of Cascina Grossa. When the pursuing Austrian troops arrived, heavy musketry and artillery fire concealed Kellermann’s cavalry charge, which threw the Austrian pursuit into a disordered flight, with 14,000 killed, wounded or captured. The French casualties were on the order of 5,600, but included Desaix, the savior of the day. The Battle of Marengo sealed *une victoire politique* (a political victory) that cemented Bonaparte’s grip on power. Although a last-gasp victory in reality, Marengo was mythologized instantly in an army bulletin, and later on by three increasingly glamorized Official Reports during Napoleon’s reign.

## 1 Introduction

**TRIOMPHE À MARENGO** is a two-player game based on the Battle of Marengo fought on 14 June 1800 (25 Prairial VIII by the French Revolutionary calendar).

In the game, the French army occupies the map at the start. The Austrian army enters the map from the west. The Austrians must drive hard and fast to the east to defeat the scattered French before they can concentrate, while the French must trade space for time.

The game's visual style and color scheme is taken from the tradition of 19th-century battlefield maps, in which blue and red lines were drawn to represent the opposing armies.

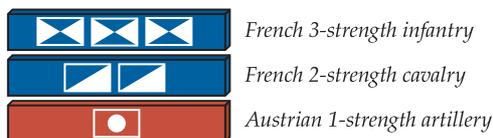
The game includes the following components:

- One game board.
- 80 rectangular red and blue wooden blocks.
- 12 red and 15 blue tokens for tracking morale.
- One black token for tracking time.
- This rules booklet.

**Special Note:** Players familiar with *Bonaparte at Marengo* should skip ahead to section 22, which summarizes differences, before returning to read the rest of the rule book.

## 2 Playing Pieces

The wooden blocks are the game's playing *pieces*. Color identifies army. Each piece has a *face* marked with symbols. The number of symbols is the piece's *strength*. The kind of symbol is the piece's type: *infantry*, *cavalry*, or *artillery*. See the examples below:



Generally, players can see the faces of their own pieces but conceal them from their opponent. In certain situations the rules require a player to reveal the face of a piece, then conceal it again.

During play, pieces can be *reduced* in strength as a result of attacks and retreats. A piece is reduced by removing it and replacing it with another piece of the same type and one-point lower strength. (For example, a 3-strength infantry is reduced by replacing it with a 2-strength infantry.) A piece reduced to 0-strength is removed without replacement. The faces of reduced pieces and their replacements are briefly revealed during substitution.

At full strength, an infantry piece represents about 2000 soldiers, a cavalry piece represents about 1200 troopers, and an artillery piece represents about 40 guns and their crews.

The game's *morale tokens* do not represent military forces and are *not* considered pieces. They exist solely to track morale (see section 18) and have no other effect on play.

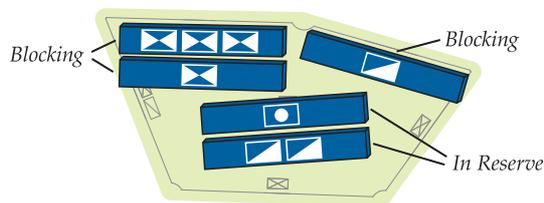
## 3 The Game Map

The game map is overlaid with polygons. The polygons are *locales*. Locales regulate pieces' location and movement.

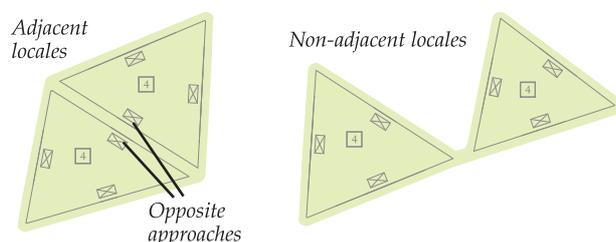
Within a locale are multiple *positions*: The locale interior is the *reserve position*. Each locale side is an *approach position*.

A piece in a locale occupies a specific position in that locale. That can be either *in reserve* or *blocking* one of the approaches. Multiple pieces can be in the same position. A locale is considered to be *occupied* by an army if it has any piece(s) in any position(s) in that locale.

Pieces in the same position can be arranged any way that is convenient, providing only that it is clear which pieces are in which positions.



Locales are *adjacent* if they meet at parallel approaches. They are not adjacent if they meet only at their corners. The approaches between adjacent locales are *opposite approaches*.



Approaches can be *narrow* or *wide*.



To *fully block* an approach, at least two blocking pieces are required if the approach is wide; just one if it is narrow. A wide approach blocked by a single piece is said to be *partly blocked*.

Locale symbols are explained below:

- ☒ **Infantry and cavalry penalties.** Assaults across them led by the matching piece type are penalized when they are in the approach occupied by the defender.
- ☒ **Artillery penalty.** Artillery cannot bombard or conduct assault defensive artillery fire across it where it is in the approach opposite the artillery.
- ☒ **Impassable.** Pieces can neither occupy nor cross it.
- ☒ **Cavalry-obstructing.** When in the defending side's approach, cavalry is severely restricted in its ability to attack and defend.
- ☒ **Locale capacity.** Pieces may not enter a locale (even to pass through it) if doing so would cause the number of friendly pieces in the locale to exceed its capacity.
- ☒ **Main roads (top) and local roads (bottom).** Pieces can move up to three locales a turn by road, and, if the road is a main road, they can do so at no command cost.
- ☒ **French set-up.** The symbol count is the piece count.
- ☒ **Objective line.** Used in marginal victory conditions.
- ☒ **Approach direction.** An arrow pointing west to east. The Austrians can retreat east and the French west only if there are no other choices.

All the remaining map artwork (towns, swamps, elevation contours, etc.) is purely decorative and has no effect on play.

## 4 Set-up

(1) On the time track (PISTE HORAIRE), put the time marker in the 6:00AM (6h) space, and put 12 French and 12 Austrian morale tokens in spaces as shown.

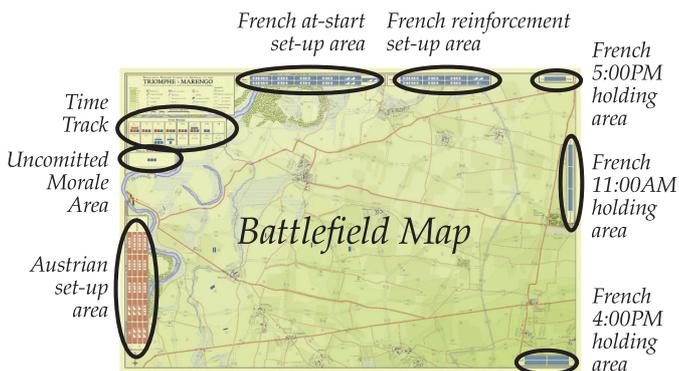
(2) Put 3 French morale tokens in the uncommitted morale area (ZONE DE MORAL NON ENGAGÉ) as shown.

(3) Put pieces face-up in the three set-up areas along the edges of the board (*Alessandria*, AU DÉBUT, and RENFORTS), matching the armies, strengths and types. Many pieces will be left over. Left-over pieces are used as reduction replacements.

(4) Randomly shuffle the pieces from the French at-start (AU DÉBUT) set-up area face-down. (The top of the game box can be used for this) The French player blindly draws them and places them in French set-up locales, matching the number of symbols in each locale. Pieces are placed in reserve. The French player may look at the faces only *after* they are been assigned their set-up positions.

(5) Randomly shuffle as above, but this time use the pieces from the French reinforcement (RENFORTS) set-up area to fill the three French holding areas for 5:00PM, 11:00AM, and 4:00PM (5h, 11h, and 4h respectively). The French player may look at the faces only *after* they are been assigned their holding areas.

(6) The Austrian player hides the faces of his pieces in the Austrian set-up area (except the artillery) and shuffles them as per section 17.



## 5 Sequence of Play

**Rounds.** The game is played as a series of 16 rounds. Each represents one hour of historical time. In a round, each player takes a *turn*: first the Austrian player, then the French player. The time marker is then advanced one hour. The game ends after the 9:00PM round.

**Turns.** In a player's turn, they first perform any *scheduled morale updates* (see section 18), then *approach clean-up* (see section 16), then *actions* (see section 6), and finally *morale clean-up* (see section 18).

## 6 Actions

In a player's turn, *actions* are used to *march* and *attack*. March actions have two types: *off-road march* (see section 7) and *road march* (see section 8). Attack actions have three types: *maneuver attack* (see section 9), *bombardment* (see section 10), and *assault* (see section 11). One additional special action type of is *organize* (see section 14).

A player gets a total of three (3) *commands* per turn. Most actions require that a command be expended to perform the action. Exceptions are off-road marches that qualify as defensive marches (see section 7), road marches on main roads, and all

bombardment actions, any of which can be performed without expending a command.

Actions are performed sequentially. One must be completed before another can begin.

Once a piece has participated in an action that turn (whether or not that action has a command cost), it is done for the turn and cannot participate in a second action that turn (whether or not the second action has a command cost). There is one exception to this restriction: the organize action. A piece that participates in an organize action can participate in a second action that turn.

No more than three (3) pieces can ever participate in a single action. Even lower limits apply to road marches (one piece) and organize actions (one or two pieces as per section 15).

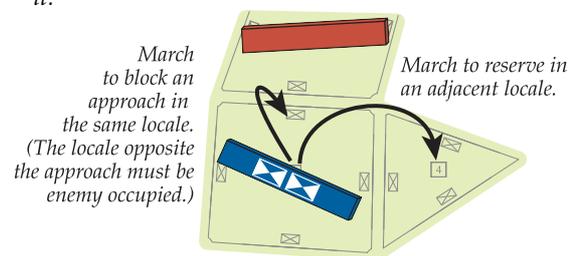
## 7 Off-Road Marches

A piece performing an off-road march action can move within its locale or to an adjacent locale. An off-road march cannot be made into an enemy-occupied locale.

To make an off-road march together as a single action, all the pieces must move *from* the same locale and position, *to* the same locale and position.

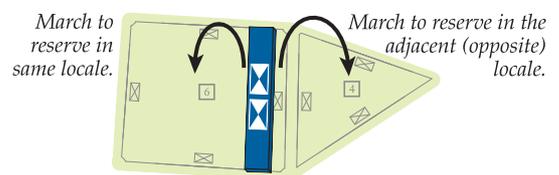
From reserve, a piece can off-road march as follows:

- It may march into the reserve position in an adjacent locale.
- It may march to block an approach of the locale it occupies. The locale opposite the approach *must* be enemy-occupied. *The march can qualify as a defensive march and made at no command cost if it does not result in more friendly pieces in the approach than the minimum needed to fully block it.*



From an approach, a piece can off-road march as follows:

- It may march into reserve in its own locale.
- It may march into reserve in the adjacent (opposite) locale.



## 8 Road Marches

A piece performing a road march action can move up to three locales in a single turn, entering one after another. The start locale, the approaches and locales crossed, and the end locale must be connected by continuous, unbroken road. (A piece starting or arriving at an intersection can leave it along any of the intersecting roads. An intersection does not break a road.)

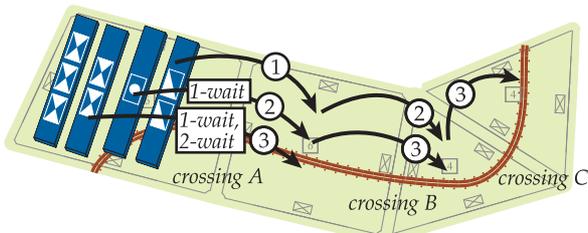
To road march, a piece must start its turn in reserve.

A single road march action can move exactly one piece at the cost of one command. *If, however, a piece marches entirely on main roads, from start to end, the piece can make the march at **no command cost**.*

Historically, road marches were greatly complicated and slowed by traffic congestion. To simulate this, traffic limits are imposed at **crossings**, and road marches are carried out in **steps**.

- A crossing is where a road passes from one locale to an adjacent locale. (If there are multiple roads passing between a pair of adjacent locales, each road has its own crossing.)
- A piece marching by road counts off its march in up to three steps. In each step, a piece can either move *through* a crossing (into reserve in the next locale), or it can wait for traffic at that crossing (remain in reserve in the current locale; see below).
- Each crossing has a **traffic limit**. Only three pieces can march through a crossing in the same turn, and each must do so at a higher step count in its respective march than those that preceded it. This can force a piece to count off steps waiting at a crossing, in order to cross at a higher step count.

The following example shows how pieces can be forced to use steps waiting in order to comply with traffic limits at crossings:



First, the cavalry marches: on step 1 it moves through crossing A, on step 2 crossing B, and on step 3 crossing C.

Second, the artillery marches: on step 1 it waits for traffic, on step 2 it moves through crossing A, and on step 3 crossing B.

Third, the 2-infantry marches: on step 1 and 2 it waits for traffic, and on step 3 it moves through crossing A.

Last, the 3-infantry does not road march. It would have to use all three of its steps waiting for traffic, with none left to move.

Pieces marching by road cannot march through the same crossing in different directions in the same turn.

Traffic limits do not affect and are not affected by off-road marches. Traffic limits only affect and are affected by road marches.

A cavalry piece during a road march can attempt to step into an enemy-occupied locale. At the time such a step occurs, it is immediately resolved as a maneuver attack (see section 9). The road march can continue after a win by the attacker (and can include additional maneuver attacks), but cannot continue after a win by the defender (the cavalry ends its move in the attack locale). Maneuver attacks during a road march are not separate actions but are part of the road march action. A road crossing cannot be used for more than one road maneuver attack a turn. For traffic calculations, the cavalry is considered to have used the attack crossing whether or not the attack succeeds. At the end of a road march in which a piece made maneuver attacks, it's face must be briefly revealed to show that it is cavalry.

Apart from cavalry maneuver attacks, a piece moving by road march cannot enter (or attempt to enter) an enemy-occupied locale.

## 9 Maneuver Attacks

A maneuver attack is a type of attack. It is an attempt to take an adjacent enemy-occupied locale by crossing an approach in that locale that is either unblocked or only partly blocked by enemy pieces. (A maneuver attack cannot be made if the enemy approach is fully blocked.)

A maneuver attack can be performed as an action in and of itself, or it can be performed during a cavalry road march, as part of the road march action.

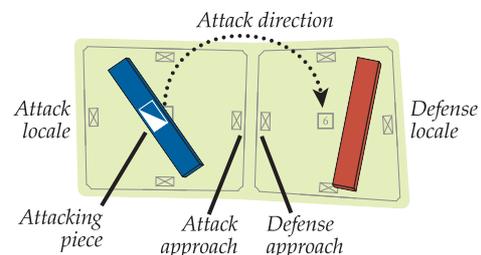
A maneuver attack can be made from reserve or from an approach. If from an approach, the attack must be into the locale opposite that approach.

A maneuver attack must include infantry if the *defense* approach is marked as cavalry-obstructing. The attacker must reveal the face of one of his attacking pieces at the end of the attack to prove it is infantry. (Cavalry-obstructing terrain in the attack approach is ignored.)

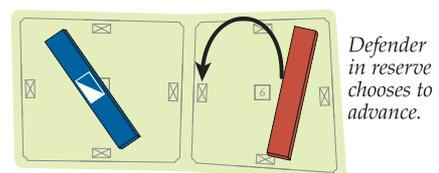
The maneuver attack procedure, with examples, is as follows:

**1. Attack declaration.** The attacker names the **attacking pieces** for the attack, and indicates the **attack direction**. (He cannot name more than three pieces, since the three-piece limit for actions applies.) All the attacking pieces must occupy the same position and must all attack in the same direction. The attack direction specifies the locale being attacked (the *defense locale*) and the approach in that locale the attack will cross (the *defense approach*). For a road march maneuver attack, the direction also specifies the road crossing for the attack; a road crossing can only be used for one road maneuver attack a turn.

The attack declaration implicitly defines the **attack approach** (the approach opposite the defense approach) and the **attack locale** (the locale containing the attack approach.) Because they are implicit, they do not have to be directly stated.

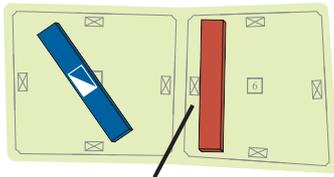


**2. Defense response.** If the attack is from reserve in the attack locale, the defender can choose to respond with pieces from reserve in the defense locale and advance them to the defense approach. The defender cannot choose more responding pieces than there are attacking pieces. *If the attack is from the attack approach, the defender **cannot** advance pieces from reserve to the defense approach.*



**3. Result determination.** The defender wins if the attack is blocked, otherwise, the attacker wins. The attack is blocked if either:

- The defense approach is *fully* blocked.
- The defense approach is *partly* blocked, and (1) there is exactly one attacking piece and (2) this is the first maneuver attack across that approach this turn.

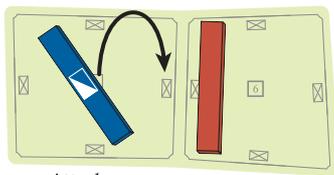


Defense approach fully blocked, attack is blocked.

#### 4. Attack completion.

Completion is as follows:

- *If the attacker won:* **All** of the defender's pieces in the defense locale must retreat (see section 13). All the attacking pieces advance into reserve in the attacked locale.
- *If the defender won:* The defender's pieces remain in place. If the attack was from the attack approach, the attacking pieces remain in place. If the attack was from reserve in the attack locale, the attacking pieces can advance (all or none) to the attack approach.



Attacker can choose to move to the attack approach. Defender remains in place.

## 10 Bombardment

A bombardment is a type of attack. Only an artillery piece can conduct bombardment. Bombardment is a two-action, two-turn process: a player declares it in one of his turns, and completes it in his next turn.

Neither bombardment declaration nor completion has a command cost.

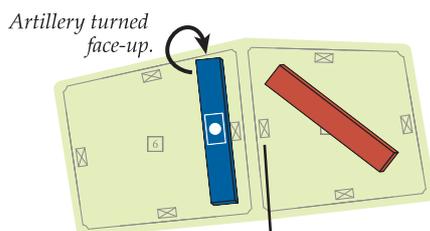
Bombardment can be made only from an approach. The attack must be into the locale opposite the approach. Enemy pieces can be anywhere in the attacked locale. (An artillery piece in reserve cannot make a bombardment attack.)

A bombardment attack is not permitted if there is an artillery penalty in the approach opposite the artillery's approach. (An artillery penalty in the artillery's approach is ignored.)

A player can cancel his bombardment declaration before completion without cost or penalty. It is automatically canceled if, for any reason, the artillery leaves its declaration position. (Canceling a bombardment declaration before completing it leaves the piece free to participate in some other action instead in what would have been the completion turn.)

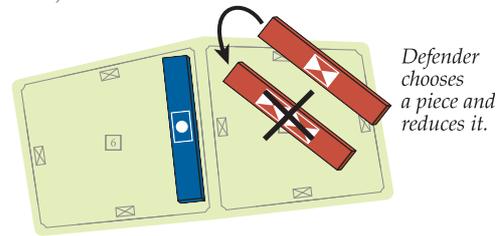
The bombardment attack procedure, with an example, is as follows:

**1. Bombardment declaration.** The attacker names the bombarding artillery and turns it face-up.



(Note: There cannot be an artillery penalty here.)

**2. Bombardment completion.** Completion is in the attacker's next turn after declaration. The defender chooses one of his pieces in the attacked locale to be reduced. First choice must be from the approach opposite the artillery, then from reserve and then from elsewhere in the locale. The piece is then reduced. The artillery should be left face-up until the end of the turn. (Completion has no effect if the defender has no pieces in the attacked locale.)



Defender chooses a piece and reduces it.

## 11 Assaults

An assault is a type of attack. It is an attempt to take an adjacent locale by crossing an enemy-blocked approach in that locale. (The enemy approach can be fully or partly blocked.)

Pieces must be blocking an approach to make an assault. The approach must be opposite the enemy-blocked approach the pieces are crossing. (Pieces in reserve cannot make an assault.)

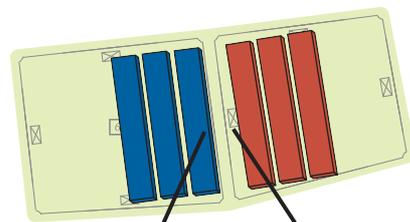
An assault must have at least one leading piece (as per step 3 of the assault procedure). It is not legal to declare an assault where there would be no piece eligible to lead it.

After an assault lost by the attacker, no march or attack can be made across that same approach for the rest of the turn. (This prevents a march even if the defender was eliminated. Not prevented is a maneuver attack or bombardment across an approach *before* an assault across it.)

After an assault won by the attacker, no entry into the defense locale, by any approach, can be made by road march later that same turn. (Not prevented is later entry by off-road march.)

The assault resolution procedure, along with an example, is as follows:

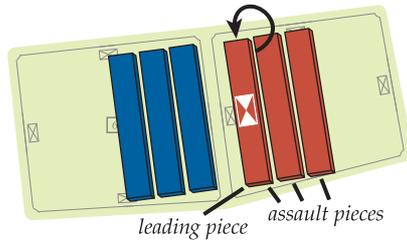
**1. Assault declaration.** The attacker names the *attack approach*: the approach from which the assault will be made. The opposite approach is the *defense approach*. The locale containing the attack approach is the *attack locale*. The locale containing the defense approach is the *defense locale*.



Attack approach Defense approach

**2. Defense pieces declaration.** All of the defender's pieces in the defense approach are considered his assault pieces. From his *assault pieces*, the defender can select *leading pieces* and turn them face-up. Selection is governed as follows:

- In a narrow approach, the defender can select zero pieces or one piece; in a wide approach, zero, one or two can be selected.
- Two leading pieces must be the same type.
- Cavalry cannot lead if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing.

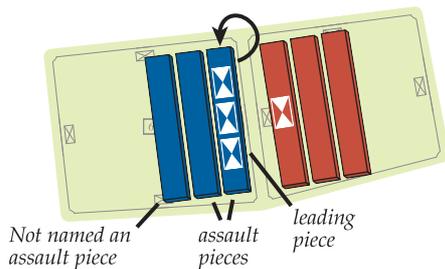


**3. Attack pieces declaration.** The attacker names which of his pieces in the attack approach will be his *assault pieces*. (He cannot name more than three pieces, since the three-piece limit for actions applies.) From his assault pieces, the attacker must select the *leading pieces* and turn them face-up. Selection requirements are as follows:

- In a narrow approach, the attacker must select exactly one piece; in a wide approach, one or two can be selected.
- Two leading pieces must be the same type.
- Cavalry cannot lead if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing.
- Each leading piece must have a strength of two or more.

(The named assault pieces must include at least one piece eligible to be a leading piece. The attacker, unlike the defender, cannot select zero leading pieces and cannot select one-strength leading pieces.)

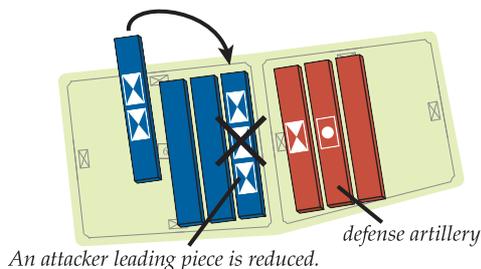
(Pieces in the attack approach which are not named as assault pieces do not participate in the assault in any way: they do not take assault reductions nor do they advance on success.)



**4. Artillery defense.** The defender can choose to conduct an artillery defense if all of the following conditions apply:

- The defender's assault pieces include an artillery piece.
- The artillery is not a leading piece.
- The artillery did not declare or complete a bombardment attack in the defender's previous turn.
- There is not an artillery penalty in the *attack* approach.

To conduct the defense, the defender briefly reveals the artillery's face to the attacker. The attacker then chooses one of his leading pieces and reduces it.

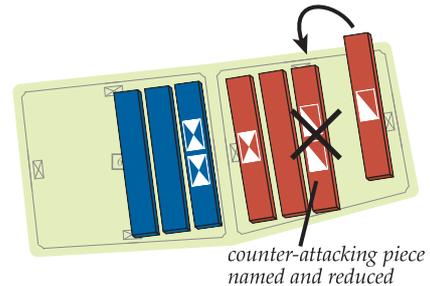


**5. Defense counter-attack.** The defender has the option to name *counter-attacking pieces* from among his assault pieces and turn them face-up. If the defender does so, the following requirements have to be met:

- A counter-attacking piece cannot also be a leading piece.

- In a narrow approach, the defender must name one piece; in a wide approach, he can name one or two.
- Two counter-attacking pieces must be the same type.
- Cavalry pieces cannot be named if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing.
- Each counter-attacking piece must have a strength of two or more.

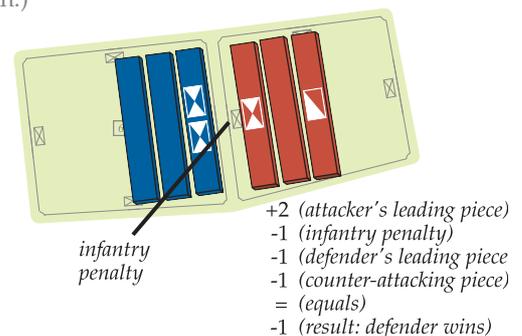
The counter-attacking pieces immediately take as many reductions as there are attack leading pieces. If a player has two counter-attacking pieces, he must divide the reductions between them as evenly as possible, with the player free to choose which of his two pieces receives any odd reduction. (There is no defense benefit in naming counter-attacking pieces that would be immediately eliminated in this step.)



**6. Result calculation.** Calculate as follows:

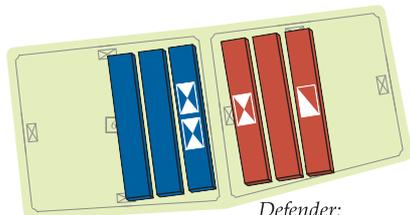
- Total the strengths of the attacker's leading pieces, and
- Subtract one for each infantry or cavalry penalty in the *defense* approach that matches the type of the attacker's leading pieces, and
- Subtract the total strength of the defender's leading pieces (which can be zero), and
- Subtract the total strength of the counter-attacking pieces.

The attacker wins on a result greater than zero, and the defender wins on a result less than or equal to zero. (Note that the defender can win even if eliminated; such a result means that the defenders succeeded in holding off the attackers for the duration of the turn, even if they would not be able to do so for another turn.)



**7. Reduction calculation.** Reductions are calculated as follows:

- Each side will suffer one reduction for each enemy leading piece (which can be zero).
- The attacker takes one additional reduction for each (surviving) counter-attacking cavalry piece.
- On an attacker loss, if the negative of the result is equal to or greater than the total current strength of the attacker's leading pieces, then add 1 to the attacker reduction total if there is 1 attacker leading piece, and 2 if there are 2 attacker leading pieces. (In the example, the negative of the -1 result is 1, which is not equal to or greater than the attacker's total strength of 2, so no additional attacker reductions.)

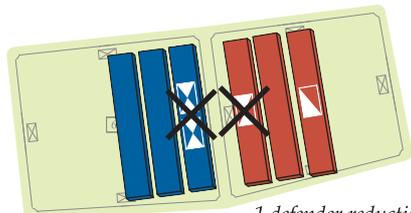


Attacker:  
 +1 (enemy leading piece)  
 +1 (counter-attacking cavalry)  
 = (equals)  
 2 (reductions lost)

Defender:  
 +1 (enemy leading piece)  
 = (equals)  
 1 (reduction lost)

**8. Reduction assessment.** A player applies reductions to his pieces as follows:

- All reductions must be applied to leading pieces first. If a player has two leading pieces, he must divide the reductions between them as evenly as possible, with the player free to choose which of his two pieces receives any odd reduction.
- If the number of reductions is greater than the total strength of his leading pieces, the player applies the excess to his other assault pieces, distributed as he wishes.
- If the result calls for more reductions than the total strength of a player's assault pieces, the excess is ignored. (Ignored reductions do not affect morale.)

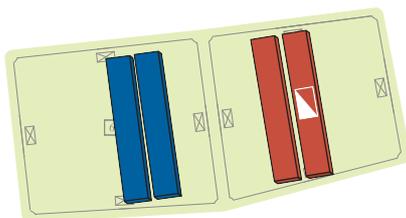


2 attacker reductions 1 defender reduction

**9. Assault completion.** Completion is as follows:

- *If the defender won:* All pieces remain in place.
- *If the attacker won:* **All** of the defender's pieces in the defense locale must retreat (see section 13). All the attacker's assault pieces advance into reserve in the attacked locale.

At the end of the assault, all revealed faces are hidden again.



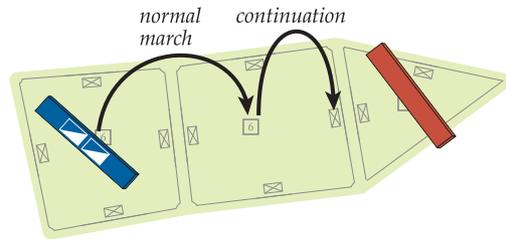
Pieces remain in place.

(Both players can clarify where pieces are by pushing surviving pieces in the approach closer to it.)

**12 Cavalry Continuation**

Cavalry has the ability of *continuation*. At the end of a maneuver attack, assault, road march, or off-road march that ends in reserve in a locale, cavalry can use *continuation* to advance to block an approach in that locale. The locale opposite that approach **must** be enemy-occupied.

Continuation (as the name suggests) continues an action; it is not itself an action. Continuation does not expend a command, unless it is used to split up pieces (which is permitted) in a multi-piece action between multiple destination positions. In that case, each additional destination expends an additional command.



Cavalry can use continuation at the end of a road march, but only to an approach connected by road to the piece's march road. Continuation at the end of a maneuver attack during a road march ends the road march. *Note:* a cavalry piece in reserve can "road march" zero crossings and then use continuation (at no command cost) to follow a main road from reserve to an approach in its start locale.

In a maneuver attack, if the attacker lost, continuation is restricted to the attack approach.

In an assault, continuation is permitted only if the attacker won.

To use continuation, a piece's face must be briefly revealed to the opposing player to show that it is cavalry.

**13 Retreats**

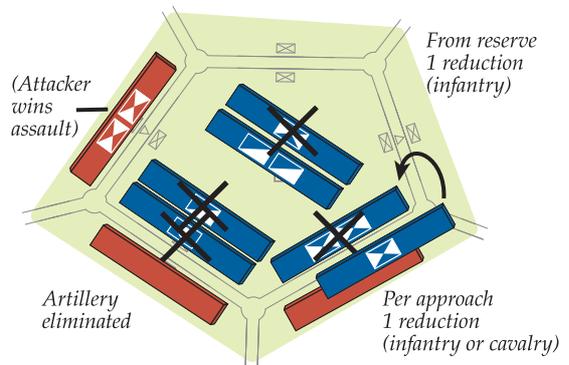
A retreat is the evacuation of a locale resulting from a defender loss in a maneuver attack or assault. When a defeated defender has to retreat from a locale, *all* of his pieces in that locale must retreat.

A retreat is not an action and does not expend a command.

The retreat procedure, along with an example, is as follows:

**1. Reduction assessment.** The defender reveals the pieces' faces, then applies reductions to his pieces as follows:

- First, artillery in any position is eliminated.
- Then, in each approach, the pieces blocking the approach take a total of one reduction if the approach is narrow, and a total of 2 reductions if the approach is wide; reductions can be taken by infantry, cavalry, or a mix of the two.
- Finally, *infantry* pieces in reserve take a total of one reduction, unless the retreat cause was an attack across a wide approach with multiple surviving attacking pieces advancing into the locale, in which case they take a total of two reductions.
- *In reserve, cavalry never takes reductions when it retreats.*

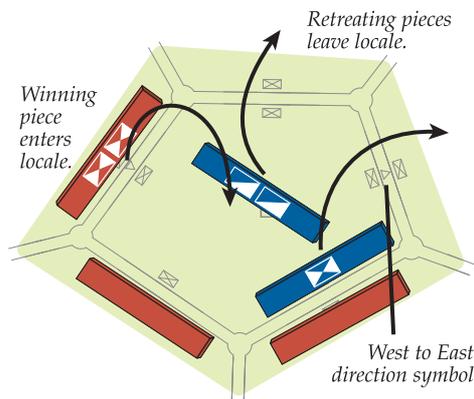


For each position, the defender chooses the pieces in that position to take the reductions. If there are not enough pieces of the specified types to take all the reductions, the excess is ignored. (Ignored reductions do not affect morale.)

**2. Retreat pieces.** All pieces in the locale are retreated into the reserve areas of adjacent locales:

- The defender chooses which pieces will go where.
- Pieces cannot retreat into a locale from which the attack came, nor into an enemy-occupied locale, nor in excess of locale capacity.
- Of the three types of approach directions (east, west, and unmarked), the French cannot retreat west nor the Austrians east unless no other legal alternatives are available. (The French do not have to prefer east to unmarked, and the Austrians do not have to prefer west to unmarked.)
- Any pieces that have no locale where they can retreat are eliminated. If locale capacity is enough for some retreating pieces, but not all, the retreating player chooses which to retreat and which to eliminate.

After all pieces are retreated, their faces are again hidden. (The attacking player does see which pieces retreat into which locale.)



## 14 French Disorganization

In the historical battle, the Austrian attack surprised the French. To reflect this, the following rules are in effect:

On the 6:00 AM round (only), French pieces *cannot* block approaches by any means.

Also, all French pieces on the map at start are *disorganized* and subject to restrictions. They are converted to *organized* (the normal state for pieces) by organize actions.

A disorganized piece cannot attack. It can march between positions within its locale, and can block maneuver attacks, but it cannot march out of its locale. A disorganized piece can leave its locale by retreat, but this does not end disorganization restrictions; it just changes the locale to which they apply.

If there are fewer than three organized French pieces on the map at the time of an organize action (not counting eliminated pieces or pieces the action is about to organize), the action organizes a single piece. If there are three or more organized French pieces on the map, it can organize two pieces. The French player chooses the pieces to be organized by an organize action. If two pieces, they do not have to be in the same locale.

In a single turn, it is not permitted to organize just some of the pieces in a locale. Either enough actions must be used to organize all the pieces in a locale, or none of them can be organized.

A piece can be organized by an organize action and perform another action in the same turn. Any command cost of that other action is in addition to the command cost of the organize action.

If a retreat or march puts organized and disorganized pieces in the same locale, all become *immediately* disorganized and *im-*

*mediately* subject to disorganization restrictions. (A road march would end in that locale.)

French reinforcements enter the game already organized without the need for expending organize actions on them.

## 15 Reinforcements

Pieces placed in holding areas during set-up are eligible to enter the map as reinforcements at the times and entry roads indicated for them on the map. (The Austrian set-up area is also a holding area.)

A piece entering the map as a reinforcement must use road march. Where the road enters the map is considered to be the first crossing of the march and traffic limits apply to it. If more pieces are available to enter than traffic limits allow, the excess must wait until another turn.

Eligible reinforcement pieces are never *required* to enter. (They can be voluntarily held off-map.) They can enter in any order the moving player chooses.

While there are reinforcements in a holding area yet to enter the map, no enemy piece may enter (or attempt to enter, by assault or maneuver attack) the locale which these reinforcements have to enter first.

In the historical battle, the Austrians threw a pontoon bridge across the Bormida River. To reflect this, in addition to being able to have three Austrian reinforcement pieces enter per turn by the main road, one additional piece per turn can enter by crossing the pontoon bridge. A piece entering by pontoon bridge must end its move in the entry locale. (There is no road from the pontoon bridge out of the locale.) Pontoon bridge entry does not require the expenditure of a command.

The Austrian artillery cannot enter before the 7:00AM round. Prior that round it stays face-up in the Austrian holding area.

## 16 Approach Clean-up

A player performs approach clean-up for his pieces at the start of his turn. (Only at the start of his own turn and only for his own pieces.)

During approach clean-up, if a piece is blocking an approach, and the locale opposite that approach is not enemy-occupied, then the approach is cleaned up by moving the piece back into reserve in its own locale. Where clean-up is not mandatory it is forbidden. Approach clean-up is not an action and does not expend a command. (A piece that is cleaned-up can perform an action afterwards in that same turn.)

## 17 Shuffling Pieces

To conceal the identity of reinforcement pieces or pieces whose faces have been revealed and then hidden again, a player can pick up his own pieces in the same position, or in the same holding area, secretly shuffle them together, and then put them back.

Shuffling can be done at any time (even in an opponent's turn), but pieces that are eligible to perform an action later that turn cannot be shuffled together with pieces that are not eligible to perform an action later that turn.

## 18 Morale

Each army in the game has a *morale level*, which is tracked with *morale tokens*. Morale can be gained or lost during play. An army's morale level at any given time is the total number of morale tokens it has in the *uncommitted morale area*, plus the number of morale tokens it has on the map as *committed morale* for individual locales. When an army's morale level drops to zero, the army is *demoralized* and immediately loses the game.

**Scheduled morale updates.** At the start of each army's turn, scheduled morale updating is performed. Any morale tokens the army has on the time track for that turn are moved to the uncommitted morale area, increasing the army's morale.

**Committing morale.** Through actions, morale can be committed as follows:

- If the defender wins in a maneuver attack, the default case is to commit one defender morale token to the defense locale. However, two defender morale tokens are committed instead if all of the following apply: the defense approach is wide, there were multiple attacking pieces, and this was the first maneuver attack across that approach this turn.
- If the *defender* wins in an assault, commit one defender morale token to the defense locale for each defender piece chosen to lead the defense and one for each piece chosen to counter-attack.
- The Austrians (only) must commit one morale token to a locale for each Austrian piece they retreat out of that locale. No commitment is required for eliminated pieces. (The penalty reflects that the Austrian army was surrounded and had to advance to break out.)
- Morale commitment requirements for a locale are first met by moving tokens there from uncommitted morale. If there are not enough uncommitted tokens, the *opposing* player is permitted (but not required) to make up all or part of the difference by choosing from the losing army's tokens committed to other locale(s) and transferring them into the locale.
- Morale tokens committed to a locale can accumulate there as the result of multiple actions and over multiple turns.

**Losing morale.** Through actions, morale can be lost as follows:

- For each reduction an army suffers from an artillery bombardment, from a retreat, or as the *loser* in an assault, it loses one morale. (The winner in an assault *does not* suffer morale losses for reductions. Loser assault morale losses for artillery defense and counter-attack reductions are deferred until the assault result is determined.)
- Morale losses for reductions are first taken from uncommitted morale. If there are not enough uncommitted tokens, the *opposing* player makes up the difference by choosing from the losing army's tokens committed to locales.

**Morale clean-up.** At the end of each army's turn, the army performs morale clean-up for its own morale. The clean-up procedure for the army's morale is as follows:

1. For each locale where the army has committed morale tokens and the locale is enemy-occupied, or where the locale is unoccupied and the last piece to enter the locale was enemy, the tokens in that locale are lost. (Steps 2 and 3 only apply to tokens that were not lost in this step.)
2. For each locale where the army has committed morale tokens and where none of the adjacent locales are enemy-

occupied, the army's tokens in the locale are returned to uncommitted morale.

3. If it is a *French* turn prior to 4:00PM, the French player can choose one committed morale token and return it to uncommitted morale. A token is not eligible to be chosen for return if during the prior enemy turn it was transferred from being committed to one locale to being committed to a different locale. (If the French have no eligible tokens for return, none can be returned. The French player cannot choose a return token on or after the 4:00PM round.)

## 19 How to Win

Demoralization of either army ends the game immediately, with the opposing army winning by *decisive victory*.



objective line

If there is no decisive victory before the end of the 9:00PM round, then Austria wins a *marginal victory* if it has at least 3 pieces east of the objective line (*ligne d'objectif*); otherwise France wins a marginal victory.

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 PLAYTESTERS: Through all the years, too many to name. Many thanks to all!

*The background of the cover shows the death of General Desaix on the battlefield of Marengo. Pencil sketch of Irina Kovaleva based on an etching of Henri Félix Emmanuel Philippoteaux.*

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### Marengo Trivia

**A.** Napoleon's horse (1793-1831), ridden for instance at Marengo and Waterloo. Its skeleton is exhibited in the National Army Museum, London.

**B.** Chicken Marengo. A French dish consisting of a chicken sautéed in oil with garlic and tomato, garnished with fried eggs and crayfish. According to a popular myth, the dish was first made after Bonaparte's victory at the *Battle of Marengo*, created by his chef Dunant using by what the foraging soldiers found.

## 20 Terrain

For ease of reference, terrain rules distributed throughout the other rules sections are repeated here, organized by terrain type.

**Infantry and Cavalry Penalties:** In an assault, for each such penalty in the *defense* approach matching the type of the attack leading pieces, one is subtracted from the attack strength during result calculation.

**Artillery Penalties:** In bombardment, if there is an artillery penalty in the *defense* approach, the attack cannot be made. In an assault, if there is an artillery penalty in the *attack* approach, an artillery defense cannot be made.

**Impassable Approaches:** Pieces can never occupy, march, attack, or retreat across approaches marked impassable, even if it would cause retreating pieces to be eliminated.

**Cavalry-obstructing Approaches:** A maneuver attack without infantry cannot be made if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing. In an assault, if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing; cavalry cannot lead the attack, lead the defense, or counter-attack.

**Wide and Narrow Approaches:** It takes at least one piece to fully block a narrow approach; two for a wide approach. A wide approach blocked by one piece is partly blocked. A maneuver attack succeeds against an unblocked approach, fails against a fully blocked approach, and may or may not succeed against a partly blocked approach. (See section 9 for details.) An assault across a narrow approach is limited to one attack leading, defense leading, and counter-attacking piece. An assault across a wide approach can have up to two attack leading, defense leading, and counter-attacking pieces.

**Locale Capacity:** Pieces may not enter (even to pass through it) a locale by march, maneuver attack, assault, or by retreat if doing so would cause the number of friendly pieces in the locale to exceed its capacity.

**Main and Local Roads:** Used for road marches. Marches entirely on main roads do not expend commands. Cavalry can perform maneuver attacks during road marches. Cavalry continuation at the end of a road march must be on the road. Reinforcements enter by road march.

## 21 Piece Types

For ease of reference, piece type rules distributed throughout the other rules sections are repeated here, organized by piece type.

**Infantry:** A maneuver attack across a cavalry-obstructing *defense* approach has to include infantry. In an assault: (1) one is subtracted from the strength of an infantry-led attack for each infantry penalty in the *defense* approach, and (2) infantry counter-attacks do not increase attacker reductions. For retreat reductions: (1) from reserve, two infantry reductions are assessed if the attack approach was wide and the attack advance is by multiple attacking pieces, or one reduction otherwise, and (2) from each approach, one reduction of infantry or cavalry is applied if the approach is narrow, or two if wide.

**Cavalry:** During road marches, cavalry can carry out maneuver attacks. Without infantry, cavalry cannot make a maneuver attack across a cavalry-obstructing *defense* approach. In an assault: (1) one is subtracted from the strength of a cavalry-led attack for each cavalry penalty in the *defense* approach, (2) cavalry counter-attacks increase attacker reductions, and (3) if the *defense* approach is cavalry-obstructing, cavalry pieces cannot lead an attack or defense, and cannot counter-attack. Continuation moves can be made only by cavalry. For retreat reductions: (1) cavalry in reserve does not take reductions, and (2) from each approach one infantry or cavalry reduction is applied if the approach is narrow, or two if wide,

**Artillery:** Without infantry, artillery cannot make a maneuver attack across a cavalry-obstructing *defense* approach. Bombardment actions can be made only by artillery. In an assault, qualifying artillery can carry out artillery defense (see section 11, step 4 for details). If forced to retreat, artillery is eliminated. Austrian artillery cannot enter before the 7:00AM round.

## 22 Differences from *Bonaparte at Marengo*

This section is to highlight differences between TRIOMPHE A MARENGO and *Bonaparte at Marengo* for players familiar with the older game. This summary is not a substitute for a thorough reading of the rules.

The rules organization has changed. There are terminology changes: *piece* for *unit*, *reduction* for *step loss*, *position* for *place*, *holding area* for *display area*, *main and local road* for *primary and secondary road*, *march* for *movement*.

The game map has been redone. There are many subtle changes to the layout of the locales.

Randomization now applies to French reinforcements as well as those French pieces that start the game on the map.

French activation has been replaced by French organization, which works differently in almost every detail.

Marches, bombardments and assaults, and *organize* (the latter replacing *activate*) are all classed as "actions" and can be performed in any order. A maximum of three pieces can participate in an action.

A march to block an approach can now be at no command cost if it qualifies as a defensive march.

A maneuver attack across a wide approach occupied by a single enemy piece is now permitted; it takes two pieces to block a wide approach against multiple attacking pieces. The number of defending pieces that can advance from reserve to block a maneuver attack now cannot exceed the number of attacking pieces.

Artillery can no longer march and declare a bombardment in the same turn.

The steps in the assault procedure have been reorganized. The defender must now name the defense leading pieces *before* the attacker names which of his pieces will be making the assault and identifies his leading pieces. Artillery defense cannot be made if there is an artillery penalty in the attack approach. Cavalry pursuit has been removed. Counter-attack has been added. Reduction calculation is now based on a combination of enemy leading pieces, counter-attacking pieces, and the result. A losing attacker no longer withdraws into reserve on losing an assault. After a successful assault, the attacker is no longer barred from entering the defense locale with other pieces later that same turn, but is barred from entering by road march.

The rule preventing cavalry continuation being used to make an approach-reserve-approach move within a single locale has been dropped.

In a retreat, two infantry reductions from reserve instead of one are suffered if the attack advance is by multiple pieces across a wide approach, and two reductions instead of one are suffered from wide approaches. The retreat reduction exemption for pieces in the defense approach in an assault has been removed. Retreating now takes into account east-west directions as printed on the map.

Pontoon bridge entry no longer requires a command. Austrian artillery cannot enter before the 7:00AM round.

Approach clean-up is now distinct from march movement and occurs at the start of the turn.

The rules for shuffling pieces are more liberal.

Morale now uses morale tokens, which can be in the uncommitted morale area or on the map as morale committed to specific locales, and which can be transferred back and forth between them. Morale can be gained over time. The winner in an assault no longer takes morale losses. Demoralization ends the game immediately.

Marginal victory is now awarded based on Austrian pieces east of the objective line at the end of the game.

## 23 Game Play Example

This section is to give some insight in the mechanics of **TRIOMPHE À MARENGO** by looking at a possible first turn move by Austria (red) and some possible responses by France (blue). The discussion is neither complete, nor are the moves shown optimum. The types of the pieces are hidden. For ease of reference, all pieces are face-down, the locales are given numbers, and the discussion is from the Austrian point of view.



In our first turn we can bring a maximum of four pieces onto the board (three on the main road, one by the pontoon bridge). But how? Should we simply move all four pieces to locale 1? Maybe this is too slow? Or, should we split them in two groups, two pieces in locale 1 and two pieces in locale 2? Or, should we enter with maximum speed?

We decide for the speed, and so we advance one piece into locale 3, a second into locale 2, and leave two pieces back in locale 1. Every piece has advanced its maximum distance. Note that none of these moves required any commands, as they are either by main road or by the pontoon bridge. Finally, one particular audacity is to lead with cavalry, so that we can use continuation to block the approach from locale 3 into locale 5. Because in their 6AM turn the French cannot block approaches, they cannot respond in their turn by blocking the opposite approach. The result is that we are threatening a maneuver attack at 7AM into locale 5 that can't be blocked. (A maneuver attack from an approach where there are no defending pieces in the opposite approach always succeeds.) This threat will stress the French, for sure.

If we think of possible French attack responses, we can see that they could target locale 3. If we block the approach to locale 5 there, and *if* the French have *cavalry* in locale 10, they can organize the two pieces in locale 10 (they can't organize just one) and make a cavalry road maneuver attack into locale 3 (arrow A). This would force our piece there to retreat, take a reduction; and we would lose one morale and would have to commit one morale into locale 3. The problem for the French here is that it requires all three French commands and leaves the northern road wide open, a highly dangerous thing for the French to do on their first turn.

Now, let's consider what the French might do defensively. One response might be to move both locale 5 pieces together into locale 4, at a total cost of three commands (B). This would cover the northern road and avoid retreat losses from a 7AM Austrian

attack into locale 5. This is an economical French solution in that it solves two problems with a single move. Another French defensive response might be to accept that the pieces in locale 5 will get attacked and forced to retreat, and instead block the northern road with the pieces from either locale 8 or 24 (C1 and C2, respectively). Each move would cost two commands. Note that this is true even for the move of the locale 24 piece, since it is moving on a local road; by doing that, however, the piece can defend the bottleneck between locales 4 and 7. Alternatively, the piece could move on the main road without command cost, but only to locale 13 (C3). This is not the perfect blocking position, but would leave the French two commands to be used somewhere else (instead of only 1).

After having completed our move, we realize another attractive opening: we could have moved our first piece to locale 4, instead of locale 3. If it were not for French disorganization, we shouldn't do this, as the French pieces in locales 5 and 8 could deliver a 1-2 punch maneuver attack sequence and force our piece in locale 4 to retreat. However, due to the fact that they would need to spend commands organizing pieces before they could move them, they don't have enough commands to do that.

Looking ahead, regardless of the French response, we need to think about where we intend to apply pressure in later turns. One option would be to focus on the French pieces guarding the northern road and try to drive north. Another option would be to attack the French center: locale 8 and 9 (Marengo). Still another would be to work around the French left at locale 10, and extend the fight in that direction. As we build up strength we will eventually allow us to do all of these at once, if we choose, but in the short term we don't have enough commands or pieces on the map to do that. Instead, we must prioritize and make choices.

### Other considerations

The above has only been an introduction. Its focus on the first turn means that the differences between pieces, and how bombardments and assaults work barely get mentioned, and so, a quick discussion here of those subjects is therefore merited. Regarding the differences between the types of pieces, probably the most important thing to be aware of is the ability of cavalry to make maneuver attacks by road and retreat from reserve without taking reductions. This makes cavalry the dominant arm in mobile situations in open terrain; it is able to both screen withdrawals and pursue beaten enemies in ways that the other two arms cannot. Regarding bombardments and assaults, these two generally work together. The main thing to understand is that taking positions by assault generally takes time. Multiple assaults against the same position over multiple turns will typically be required. The attacker ideally will want to have artillery to help, as bombardments can help break a position down faster and at lower cost to the attacker than is possible by assault alone.

While players may pick up the basics pretty quickly, they will find the game rewards extended thought and study. The armies have few pieces and few commands: every one of them counts. Games often come down to having a single piece of the right type in the right place at the right time to make the right move. It is by being far sighted, by anticipating how situations can develop, and getting their pieces in place so as to be able to seize moments of opportunity, that players can win in **TRIOMPHE À MARENGO**.

## Design Notes

Starting in 2005, I created a series of 19th century battle games whose design was inspired by the appearance of battle maps from that period. Their most distinctive aspect was the way the armies were rendered as strikingly geometrical long straight lines, one army in red and the other in blue. This appearance is what I came to call “The Look”.

I had played many conventional hex-and-cardboard wargames over the years, but knew that they could never capture The Look – they had plenty of geometry but it was the geometry of hexagons, dominated by grid direction, not at all the geometry of linear warfare.

Ironically, early wargames, the nineteenth century German Kriegspiel, physically were quite close to The Look: they used rectangular wooden blocks on a gridless map. Really, what I was trying to do was not to give wargames something they had never had, but return to something they’d had but lost.

Of course, it can be asked why a fuss is being made about The Look anyway – isn’t what really matters is how fun a game is to play, or how accurate it is, and not how it looks?

I think, however, that these things are bound together. How much fun a game is, how accurate it is, and how it looks are all grounded in the game as time machine. And we are visual creatures. We respond and understand first and foremost according to what we see.

But the strictly gridless representation of the Kriegspiel had shortcomings of its own: in such systems, measurement is used and typically there are huge differences between almost identical distances like 15/16 of an inch and 17/16 of an inch, resulting in a fussiness that is very dislocating to the sense of period – no Napoleonic commander ever worried about whether the enemy was 99 yards away or 101 yards away.

So some regulatory mechanism for quantizing position and distance had to exist: but what kind? My first thought was a point-to-point system, but soon switched to using an area-based system. Area-based systems had been used for many years, but with far more success in strategic than tactical games.

The key decision that transformed areas into a tactical model that worked the way I needed it to work was to allow pieces to be positioned not just in the centers of areas, but on the borders between the areas. And it was this choice that really locked in the basic physical design I would be working with.

Sadly, I had no game rules or mechanisms to go with them. I knew how the game would look, but how would it play?

My main game play objective was fast play. The goal was to make a game playable from start to finish in a single afternoon or evening session, and not to stick players with the situation of running out of time but still having only an incomplete game on their hands.

The first consequence of the quest for fast play was that the number of pieces would have to be kept small. It is very hard to have a game can be played in a reasonable time if it has a large number of pieces, even if the mechanics

are simple, so the game system was scaled to keep that number small.

More than that, the game needed to not waste the players’ time. The game needed to enable players to translate their decisions into moves quickly and efficiently. (Consider Chess: once a player has decided what to do, it only takes a moment to move a piece: players don’t sort stacks of tiny counters, consult tables, do tedious distance counting through hex grids, do long division to calculate ratios, roll dice, none of that. Chess play is think, move, think, move: that’s the game.)

But not wasting the players’ time isn’t only about mechanical efficiency: it is about not having unimportant decisions that have to be made. If a decision isn’t important, it shouldn’t be part of the game. Players should always feel like every choice they make matters.

Part of the solution was to not only keep the number of pieces small, but to keep the number of areas small as well. With few pieces and few areas, even a move of a single piece by a single area mattered. Another aspect fell into my lap quite by accident. Early versions featured movement that was far too fluid, that felt more like modern armor combat than 19th century tactical warfare. I needed to slow the speed down, to bring it into line with what could be done by couriers carrying messages across the battlefield. And that was done by limiting the number of moves per turn. With few moves, every move also mattered. A thing once done, could not be easily and cheaply undone.

And the above got me to where I wanted: Every piece mattered. Every area mattered. Every move mattered.

From a simulation point of view, the main thing I wanted was to strongly differentiate the arms, so that cavalry, infantry, and artillery felt very different in play. (This was a lesson I learned from Frank Davis’s game on the battle of Waterloo, *Wellington’s Victory*. Differentiating the arms is everything.)

The baseline arm is infantry. And one of the most distinctive things about infantry in my Napoleonic games is the intense violence of infantry combat. Casualties are inevitable when infantry clashes, and often heavy. Players used to wargames where “retreat” is a fairly harmless result can be shocked by how destructive it is in this game. The closed formations used historically to keep men under command could disintegrate when a unit was forced to retreat, rendering a unit useless for the rest of the battle even if most of the men survived.

By contrast, cavalry is flexible and maneuverable. Closed situations with little room for maneuver tend to be dominated by infantry, but in the open, with the armies on the move, cavalry rules the battlefield, excelling at both pursuing an enemy and screening a withdrawal.

Artillery is the opposite pole from cavalry: of no use at all in a fluid situation, and even slower to get into position than infantry, but brutal once in place, because of its ability to inflict harm without suffering it. It is the ultimate positional arm.

**TRIOMPHE À MARENGO** is the fourth of the games built around “The Look” as described above, and, by me at least, will be the last. It had its origins as a new edition of the first of these games, *Bonaparte at Marengo*, but over its design grew into becoming its own game in its own right. The order of battle is largely the same, but the map has been heavily reworked to both improve it graphically and to improve the accuracy of its terrain model.

There are many small rules differences between this game and its predecessors, but the pride of the design is the morale system, but which oddly came very late in the design process. None of the earlier games I did had anything like it. Its particular strength is the way that terrain features can take on morale importance, not because the design gives them importance, but because the players, through their choices, give them importance: armies don’t fight over this or that position because the position is intrinsically important, but because the very act of fighting for it gives it importance. I do think that players will find that it gives **TRIOMPHE À MARENGO** a character of its own, that really sets it apart from its predecessors – in a good way.

*Bonaparte at Marengo* is a good game. I was proud of it in 2005 and am proud of it now. But I do feel that really only with this game, **TRIOMPHE À MARENGO**, was I really able to achieve all that I was going for with the older game. As it is, time and age have caught up with me, and I believe it will be the last game I ever design. I do feel that it is a good way to go out, and I do hope you will feel the same.

Rachel Simmons  
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Sunnyvale, November 2021