

Blucher Spring 1813 Campaign Report
SITREP 1A
Week 1 and the Battle of Madgeburg

My gaming mates (Ben Earnest, Steve Leopard, Steve Dunn) and I started our Spring 1813 campaign using the Blucher rules and some homespun additions on Sunday Feb 24. As always, good sportsmanship was evident and our hosts at The Game Closet in Waco were awesome.

As seen in my previous post (Vienna Daily April 1) the French advanced into Prussian in 3 wings coming from north to south: Magdeburg, Jena, and Hof. The Prussians advanced out of their depot areas of Berlin and Dresden.

Columns of Maneuver

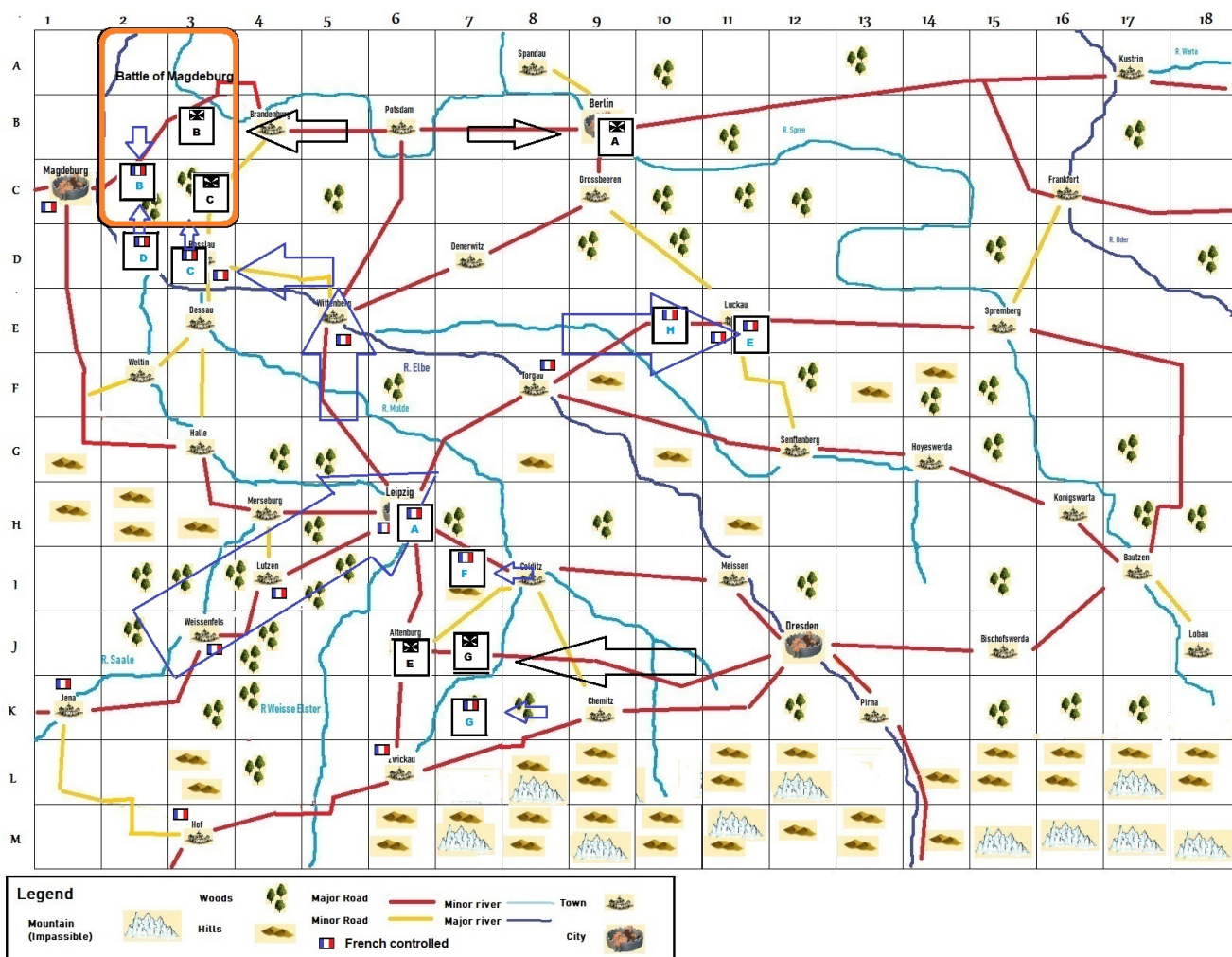
A word about these columns. Using the Scharnhorst campaign rules from Blucher columns allow for a “fog-of-war” effect in that the enemy knows somewhat of your movement (via rumors, etc), but not exactly is what in those columns. The enemy can spend movement points to scout columns to find out the number of units in a column.

Units within the columns do NOT have to all be from the same corps, but after the first turn, all columns must be “unstacked” (only 1 column per square).

Columns have a maximum number of units (commanders not included in that) of 12 for our campaign. They have a typical minimum of 1 brigade of either cav or infantry. However to increase the “rumor mill” effect, the French are allowed 1 “phantom” column with nothing in it, the Prussians with 2.

Actions So Far

After crossing the border into Prussia, what followed was some great maneuvering by 4 Prussian northern forces in attempting to isolate 2 French columns. After a day of rain on April 3, Prussian forces resumed their advance to push the French northern columns back to Madgeburg.



Situation morning April 5, 1813

Full size map can be found here:

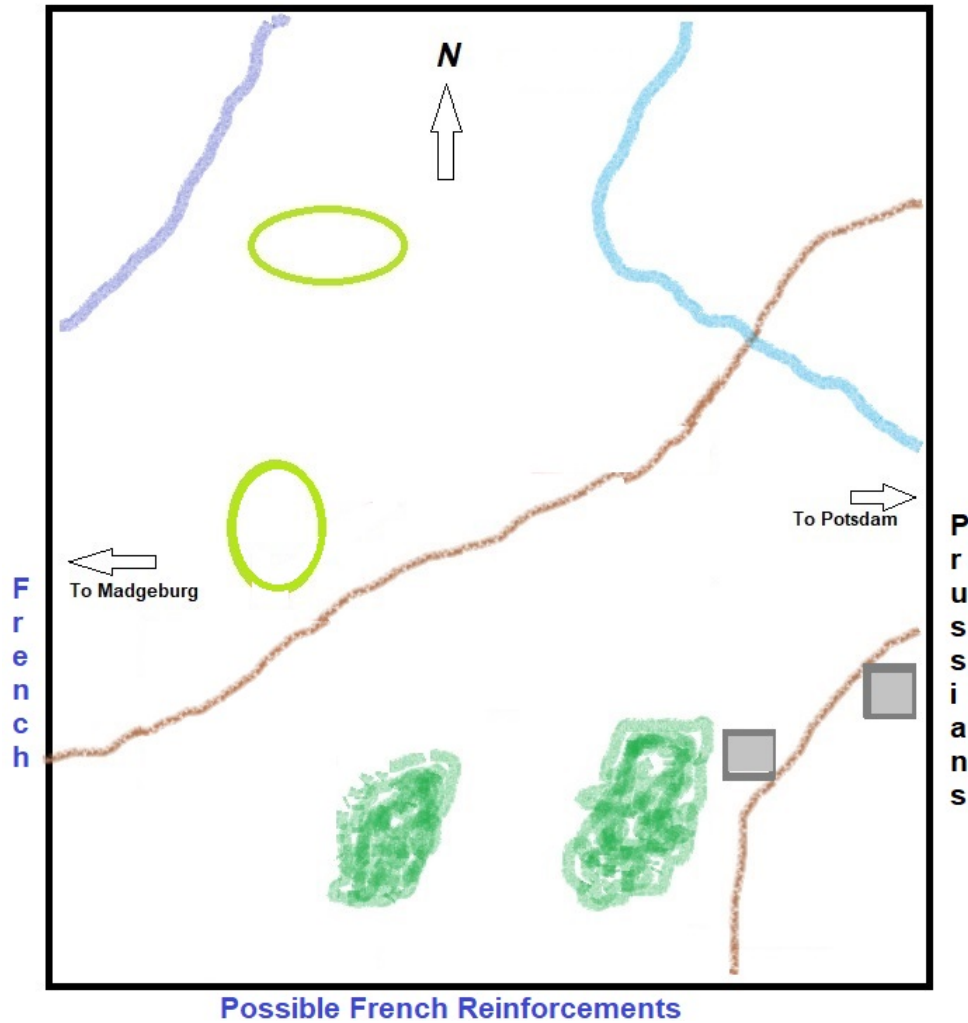
https://gamingenglishcivilwar.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/april_5.jpg

French columns in the center advanced into Leipzig (H6), and meeting no resistance, continued on as far as Luckau (E11). Meanwhile columns to the south moved as far forward as the outskirts of Chemitz (K9).

The center French advance caused the Prussian forces to decide to divert one column from northern operations to return to Berlin to defend it.

French forces in the south were able to quash rumors of an additional Prussian column F (phantom), while French forces in Column C were able to see for themselves that the supposed Prussian Column D was nothing more than a mirage (another phantom column).

However Prussian forces, in an unusually bold move, used the French distraction on scouting their phantom columns, have maneuvered to split the French columns in the south.

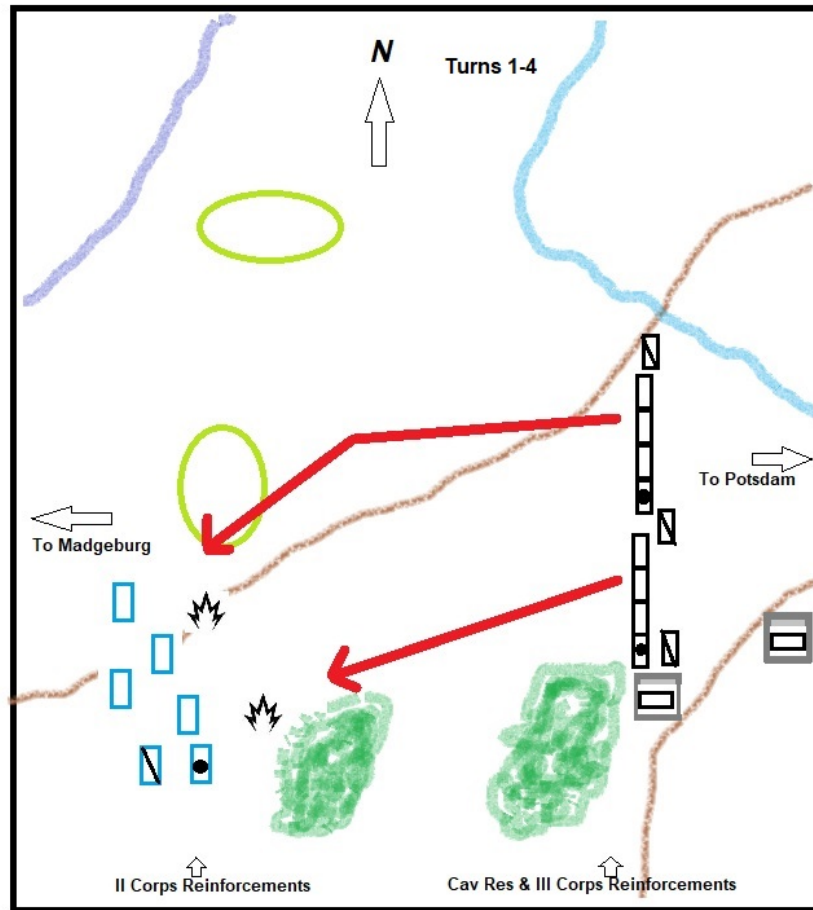


Possible French Reinforcements

Turn 0 Map

Only a portion of the French II Corps was on the field. Gen Bertrand (Greg) setup in a defensive formation awaiting events. If he could hold on long enough, perhaps the rest of his corps and perhaps Ney's III Corps could relieve him.

FM Blucher (Ben) and Roder (Steve Leopard), knowing French reinforcements were trying to get to the battlefield, pushed forward as fast as possible to attempt to overrun Bertrand's isolated units.



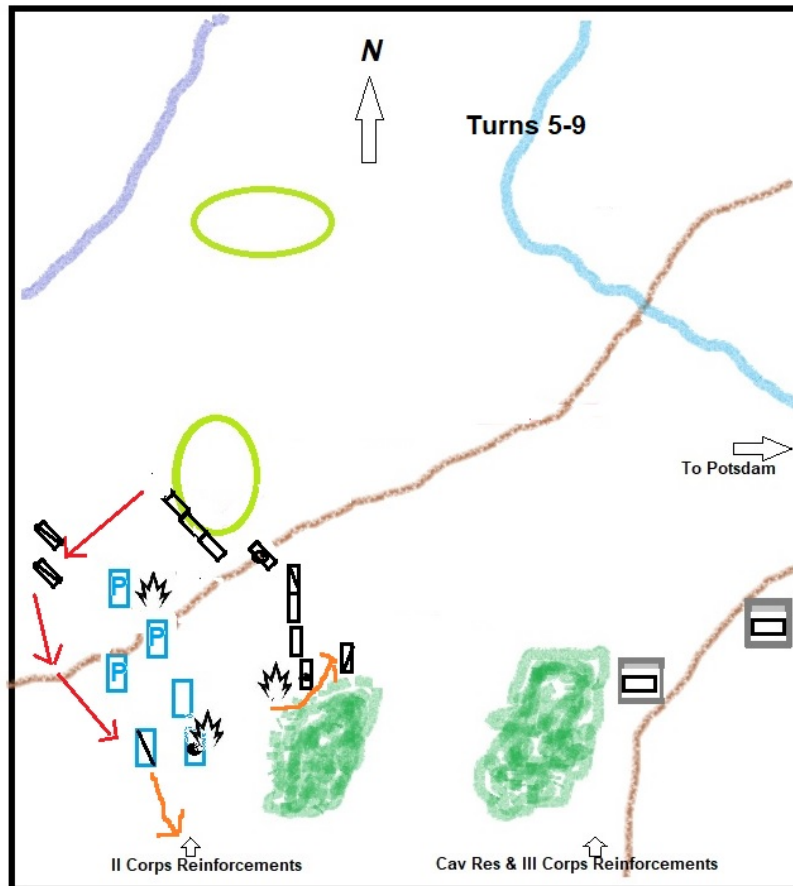
Turns 1-4

Fortunately, or unfortunately depending on which side you were on, the Momentum dice were NOT with the Prussians. With less than 200 points on the field, they only had 2 momentum dice thrown – and Greg keep rolling really low for them.

But that did not stop the casualties from starting. French artillery took a HUGE chunk out of the Prussian cav facing them, making them cower behind their own artillery and closing infantry.

It was not all going the French way either. Their artillery suffered from a massive charge of Prussian elite units, and crumbled away. The French cavalry on the right flank keep the Prussians from encircling the French center infantry.

The French divisional commander on the field considered declaring *Sauvez-vous!* (Save Yourself) but the Prussian cavalry had encircled the French, making a run for their lives suicidal. So the French decided to stick it out and await reinforcements or death.



Turns 5-9

The Prussians were slowly grinding forward under relentless shooting by the French. With the majority of cavalry on the field being Prussian, and in their rear, the French had to form into prepared formations – which meant they could not move.

Slowly but surely the Prussian grinding was taking its toll, as French elan continued to drain away with a shot here and there. The French cavalry (7th and 8th Hussars) were down to 1 elan (fatigued). A single hit/charge would drive them off the field, breaking the French on the field.

Would the French reinforcements arrive in the nick of time? Everyone held their breath as the French rolled at the end of turn 10 – A “2”! Ney’s III Corps arrives, along with elements of the Reserve Cavalry, boosting the army morale up enough to keep them on the field.

Turns 10-end

At this point, the Prussian attack was spent. The French on turn 12 received the rest of the II Corps of Bertrand’s command. French fire continued to roll well, eliminating more Prussian units. At this point the Prussian commands decided to pull what forces they could out.

Prussian cavalry fled the field as soon as they could distance themselves from the French. And some Prussian infantry too. But a few Prussians were still on the field when the army morale finally was

broken. And with the new “light cavalry” rule we just put in place, the 3 French light cav were able to catch and force the surrender of 2 more Prussian units.

Post-Battle

French forces began consolidating their columns, sorting through their losses (6 units were eventually broken). Prussian forces escaped the battlefield fleeing directly eastward toward Potsdam and Berlin.

What happens next? We will see. Great fun was had by all sides.

Follow all the action at:

<https://gamingenglishcivilwar.wordpress.com/napoleonics/blucher-1813-campaign/the-vienna-daily/>

Below are some pictures we took of the action.



Early action - Prussians close



Prussian momentum is slow - causing casualties



Turn 12 - French Reinforcements to the Rescue!