

RÈGLEMENTS DES MARIE-LOUISE

Examples of Play

By David S. Hughes

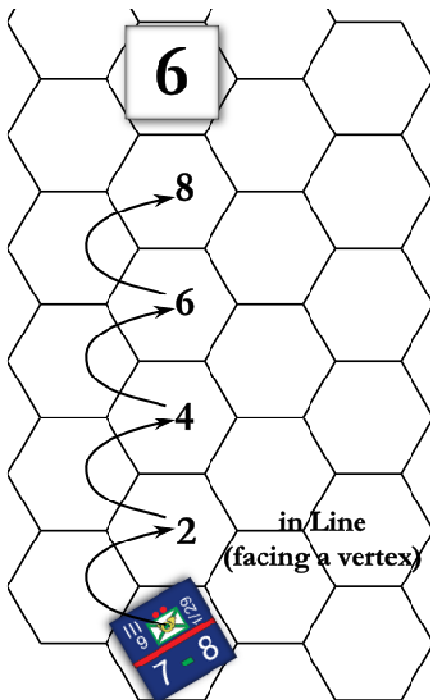
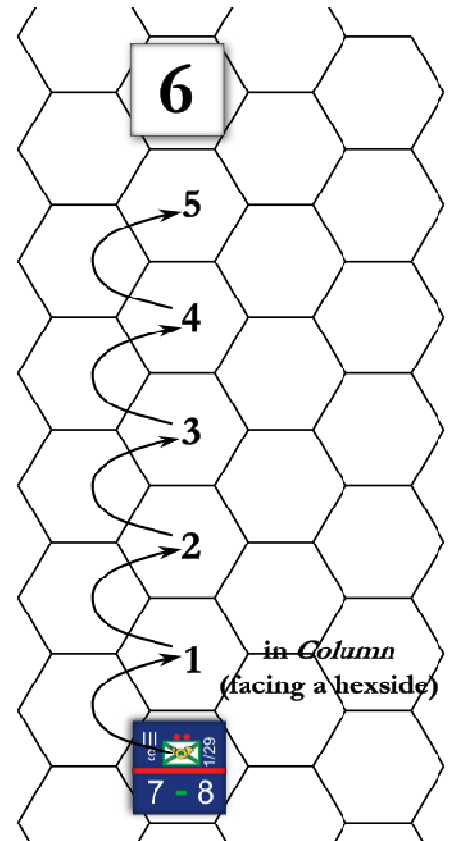
1.0 EXAMPLE 1 - Formations, Movement and Fire

This first example covers the basic movement and fire rules. Pick a French light infantry battalion – one with values of 7-8 on the front (if you have Lützen the 1/29 Légère is a good example). The unit has 7 Increments and a Movement Potential of 8. Place it on the map anywhere there is an area of clear terrain (terrain we cover later). At the start we want it to be in *column* so place it so that the top faces the *side* of a hex. Now place a number or blank chit, 6 hexes in front (this will be our first and very simple ‘target’).

It is our turn, our movement phase and we want to fire at the target. Move the 1/29 one hex at a time, at a cost of one 1 movement point per clear hex, until you are next to the target. Remember that you could move into any of the front three hexes, (they are shown on page 7 of the rules) but in this case we go straight ahead. When all movement has stopped for our side we can fire. Since we are in *column*, you first look at the back of the counter and note the top number on the left hand side – in this case 8. This is the *column* Fire Value and it stays the same until there is only one point of strength left (we call these points ‘Increments’) when it is halved to 4.

When firing you compare your value (8) to the defence value of the hex the target is in. Assume the target is also in *column*. So go to the Fire Defence Chart of the game and look up the value for a unit in *column* (that’s what the formation of the target is) that is in clear terrain. The Fire Defence value is 6 so the odds are 1:1, not quite good enough for 1.5:1. Now turn to the Fire Chart (on page 3 of the M-L charts) and roll two die (as you know one counts as the ‘first’ number, the other as the second. The result is 43 – a clean miss.

Well that was useless, except as a reminder that most columns are pathetic when firing! A *line* formation is much more useful. So at the start of the next turn (imaginary of course), we convert our *column* into *line*. This costs one movement point (see page 2 of the charts) which is irrelevant as we are adjacent, turning the counter so that it now faces the edge or point of a hex. BUT spending any movement points, when in the front of an enemy (this is called its Zone of Influence) allows that enemy to use the dreaded Opportunity Fire. But in this case we shrug (being French) since opportunity fire values are always halved and so we know that the chance of hitting is even worse than it was for us (a target similar to us would fire at 4 to 6 – that is 1-1.5 and the Fire Chart shows that will only hit on roll of 55-66).



Now imagine instead that we start where we did before, but in *line*. Advance towards the enemy! But immediate problem – the basic rule for *line* movement is that you add 1 MP to the cost of entering every hex, so each clear hex costs two. But never mind, just get adjacent and fire. When in *line*, you can only fire at just the two front hexes and your fire-strength is calculated differently – turn to the Fire Effects Chart of the game you are playing and find the multiplier for your type of unit in *line*: In Lützen the chart reads “Light (Légère) and Young Guard = x3”. The rules on *line* formation (on page 10 of the M-L rules) say that up to four points can fire from any one hex. So in this case our fire strength is $3 \times 4 = 12$ and the odds are now 2:1 – much better. The same die result of 43 now inflicts one hit.

This means that they have to take a Morale Check. Obviously an imaginary target cannot do that so let's see what would have happened if the hit had been against us. The basic idea is that you roll two dice and if the number is *equal* to or less than the morale rating of our unit, it fails. Our morale level is 24 (bottom left number on the back). Now imagine that we roll 31 – all is fine, but also imagine that we have already lost no fewer than four strength points, because sometimes this morale roll is modified. Look at the ‘General Morale Check Modifiers Chart’. Some way down it says that when a battalion has lost one-half or more of its starting strength points then there is a -6 modifier to the roll.

Note that the game uses a base 6 counting system – so subtracting six from the die-roll of 31 becomes a 21 (this type of counting is a bit tricky at first so what I do is to count up and down the entries in the Fire or Assault Charts until I wrap the idea of a base six into my head) which is *lower* than our morale of 24. Nasty things now happen! The légère battalion is now Disordered, which basically halves movement and combat capability and also makes the battalion more

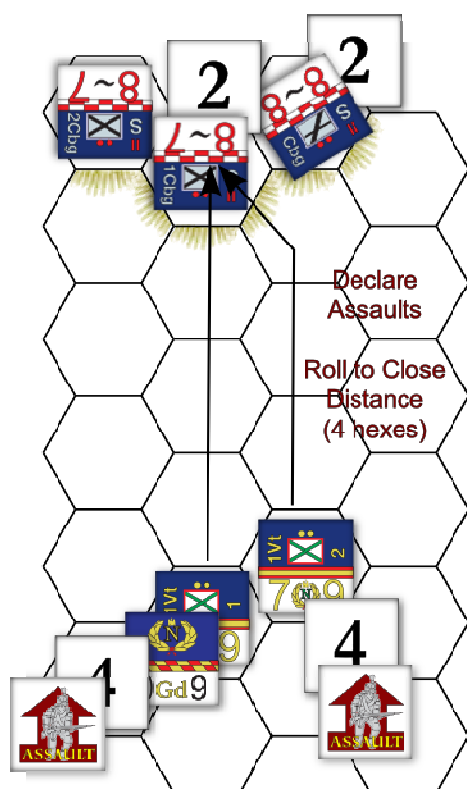
likely to fail morale again (check the chart used before and see that a disordered unit gets a -3 modifier). And you do NOT want to fail again as the battalion then becomes Plus Grande Désordre (French for 'I am scared and I am running away') which can affect the morale of the entire army – but that is for a later example.

Now just suppose that you did not want to be brave, but preferred to fire at the enemy from a distance. Look at the back of the *légère* counter. On the right is a picture of a *cornette* (light infantry used these instead of drums to signal orders) and above it the number 2. This means that you can fire at a range of two, not one – but only when in *skirmish order*. To become a skirmisher spend the usual one movement point for changing formation and flip the counter to its back. Look at the diagram on page 7 of the rules – the unit now has *four* front hexes that you can fire into, compared with just two for *line*. Unfortunately when you fire safely at a two hex range your fire is halved (unless you have rifles – such as the Prussian *schützen* battalions in Lützen) and the multipliers change. At Lützen looking at the Fire Effects Chart for *légère* in *skirmish order* (the end row) shows that the multiplier is just x2 and to make matters worse only three points can fire per hex instead of the four for *line*. So at one-hex range the fire value is 6 (3x2) and at two-hexes a measly 3 (3x2 halved). So what's the point? First remember you could have two units joining fire giving better odds and as well – look at the Fire Defence Chart for Lützen – your fire defence in *skirmish order* is not 6 anymore, it is 14!

And there is one other neat feature of skirmishers – when attacked by enemy infantry, or even cavalry, they can retreat before combat to safety. But a discussion on Assault, as this process is called, must wait for another example.

Note that when playing you should have beside you the four pages of M-L charts and the charts from the game you are playing – those from Lützen are also four pages long.

2.0 EXAMPLE 2 – Assault



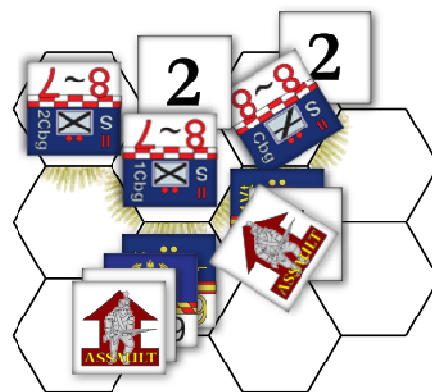
Comparing the results of the Fire and Assault Tables, fire just whittles down an enemy, but assault is decisive. So you have to be much more careful about assaulting, because once committed there is no turning back and the chances are one or the other side will finish up wrecked.

But we are French and therefore brave and victorious and will proceed. Even so good troops will help, not the mere line in the previous example. Both battalions of the 1st Voltigeur of the Young Guard will do, and just to ensure success, we will take the divisional commander along with us, Dumoustier – whose relevant modifications are +2 for both infantry *mêlée* and morale is placed with the 1st Battalion. However before we even start to move towards the quivering Prussians have a look at the Roll to Close Modifier Chart (first page of the M-L tables). Roll to Close will be rolled when we get next to the Prussians and it is governed by how far away from them we start. The best bet is at least 6 hexes away for the French – but a cunning opponent if he has the chance will get closer, just to annoy! For the purpose of this example the Prussians selected are the 1st and Fusilier Battalions of the Colberg Regiment – each with 8 increments, but both reduced by losses to 6 (always try to beat up the enemy with artillery before closing), positioned on higher ground. The 1st Battalion (for clarity the one opposed to our 1st Battalion) is in column, the Fusilier in line and both are now four hexes away. Both of our battalions are of course in column – because that is the way the Emperor likes us to attack.

At the *start* of our movement phase a '4' chit and an assault chit are placed on top of both battalions. They then move adjacent to the Prussians, ending up so that both are adjacent to their 1st Battalion. Note that the assault chit on each battalion *must* be pointed at the target of the assault – in this case the Colberg 1st Battalion as it is still in column. After the Fire Segment is complete (*remember that units marked with the assault chit cannot then fire*) the Assault Segment begins. First each French battalion must Roll to Close: This should be easy – the French base morale is 15 and the -3 for starting four hexes away is almost cancelled out for the 1st Battalion by Dumoustier's +2. In addition, we subtract 3 for assaulting units on higher ground, for a net -4. A 25 modified to 21 passes – we close. The 2nd Battalion easily passes with 33, so that the fire of both battalions is multiplied by two. Next the Prussian

Rolls to Stand, checking the modifiers on the Roll to Stand table: the are a +3 for defending on higher ground and a -3 because the 1st Colberg is being attacked in one hex from two hexes (see the Assault Odds Morale Table). He rolls a very average 33 and passes (morale is 23), also with the fire doubled.

What follows can make or break an assault. The Prussian rolls to get his 'defensive shift'; luckily for us the result is no shift as it is quite possible for this to cancel out all our strength advantage. Next up is simultaneous Offensive and Defensive Fire. The 1st Battalion Colberg fires (note that the Fusilier Battalion cannot as it is not part of the assault) – column base value of 6, doubled to 12 equals 2:1 against a column; die roll is 55 – one loss applied to the 2nd Battalion (*note that there is no morale check for losses in this Phase*). However even a single loss can have a serious effect as each impacts the *mêlée* table. The simultaneous French column fire from both battalions (they both rolled to close and both have a printed fire value of



And finally the mêlée: This is the only time when an instinct for basic maths helps – the defender first - he started at eight strength with a mêlée of 18, now down to four and therefore a mêlée value of 9. The 1st Voltigeur is still at 18, the 2nd has lost one (from seven) of its initial value of 17 (so clutching calculator 17 divided by seven equals 2.42 something, multiplied by the six left equals 14.5) for a French total of 31.5, divided by the Prussian 9 equals odds of 3 to 1. The die modifications are +2 for good old Dumoustier, and a net +6 for losses (+12 for French vs -6 for Prussian). An average die-roll of 36 is modified by +8 to 52 giving a DR result (*being a mathematical imbecile I count up and down the left side number of both the mêlée and fire charts when handling modifiers!*) The Prussians Rout – and the Emperor is pleased.

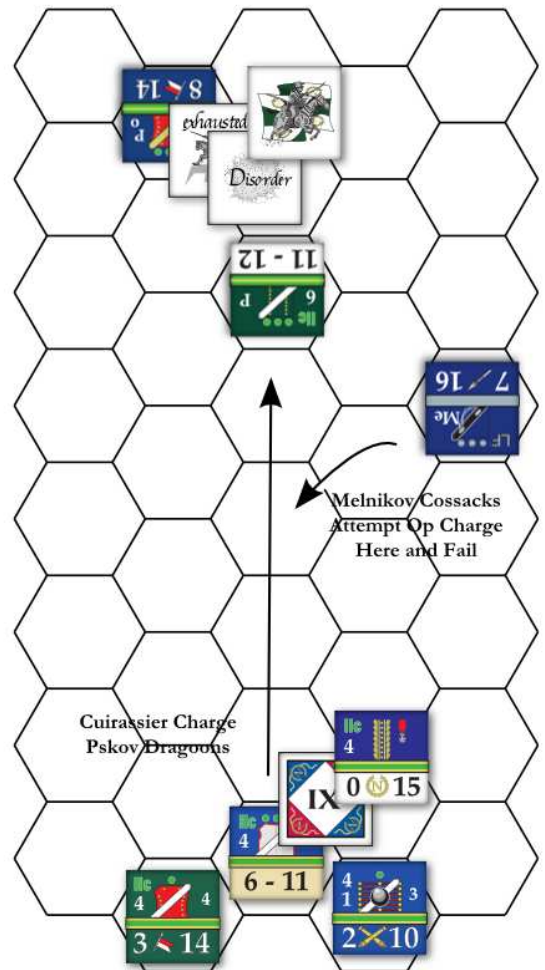


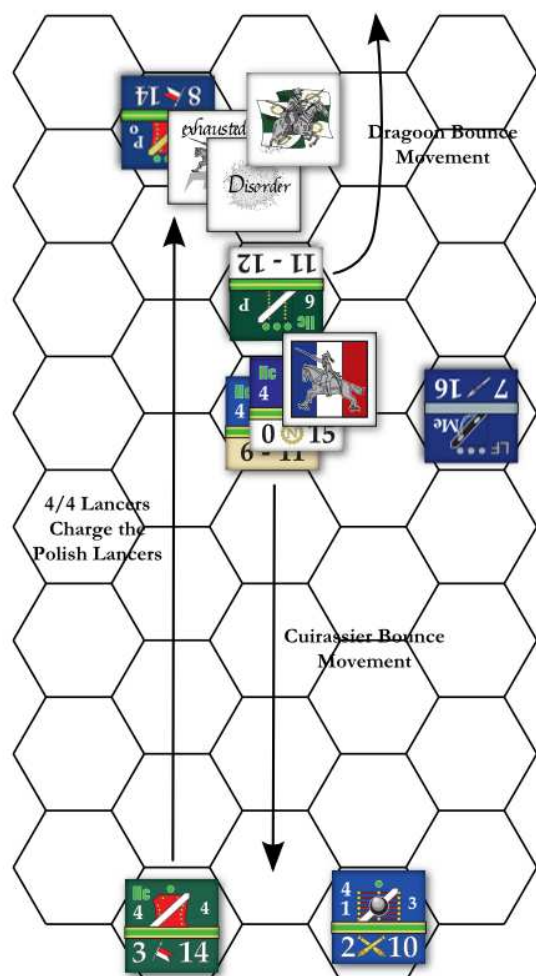
The base mêlée values are therefore different. The Colberg battalion has five points left not four so the mêlée value is 11.25, not 9. The French 2nd Battalion is now down to five increments, giving only 12.1 (2.42 times five) mêlée for a regimental total of 29.1. That is just 2:1 and the Prussian 'lucky' shift of one left takes this to 1.5:1. To make matters worse the final die modifier is now *minus* four (a net -6 for losses and a +2 for the leader). The same roll as before of 36 now drops to 32 for a result of 'no effect'. Remove both sets of '4' and Assault markers and the assault is over, leaving the French vulnerable in the next Allied fire phase.

This example uses units from the *Moscow* game:

Select three of its units the 1st Cuirassier (a 6-11) the 4/4 Lanciers (3-14) both in column, and the 3/1 Horse Artillery Battery, placing the divisional commander Defrance – with the cuirassiers. The 4th Heavy Cavalry is assigned MU IX to break the Russian cavalry screen, so the matching MU Chit IX is placed beneath Defrance. When MU Chit IX is selected the charge begins. The immediate targets are the Pskov Dragoons (a 11-12) and the Polish Uhlans (8-14), which they are covering, once formidable, but much reduced after being part of a combat in an earlier MU pull (remember that a unit cannot be attacked by cavalry more than once in a single MU pull) and located five hexes away (this distance may be important). The Melnikov Cossacks (7-16) are lurking nearby.

So the Cuirassier (now with a Charge marker on top) closes with the Pskov Dragoons and *mêlée* begins. For cavalry charges *and* *mêlées* all take place in the





target is infantry – both battalions of the Reval Regiment in line with Konovnitsyn, the 3rd Division commander with the 1st Battalion. Once again the heroes advance, this time the lancers first. As they get to four hexes distance refer to the *Moscow Square Formation Chart*. As can be seen the further away the enemy the better the chance of forming square, but both always get the nasty +6 modifier for lancers, cancelled for the 1st Battalion only by the presence of its commander. Note that this has nothing to do with the printed morale of the unit – one is instead rolling against the printed chance to form square.

This is a tricky decision for the Russians: There is no guarantee that the lancers will strike home and forming square might then do no more than make a juicy target for the horse artillery that will undoubtedly arrive soon after the cavalry. So he waits and then at two hexes the French player places a Charge marker on, indicating that the lancer *must* attack, calling the Russian bluff. The Russians now attempt to form square. At this attack a 46 or less are needed – in the case of the 1st Battalion the +6 for lancers is cancelled by the -6 for a leader; a 35 is rolled and a square formed. The 3rd Battalion then rolls as well, but fails – 41+6 is 51 and is disordered. Since, the 3rd Battalion failed its square attempt the lancers choose them to be the target.

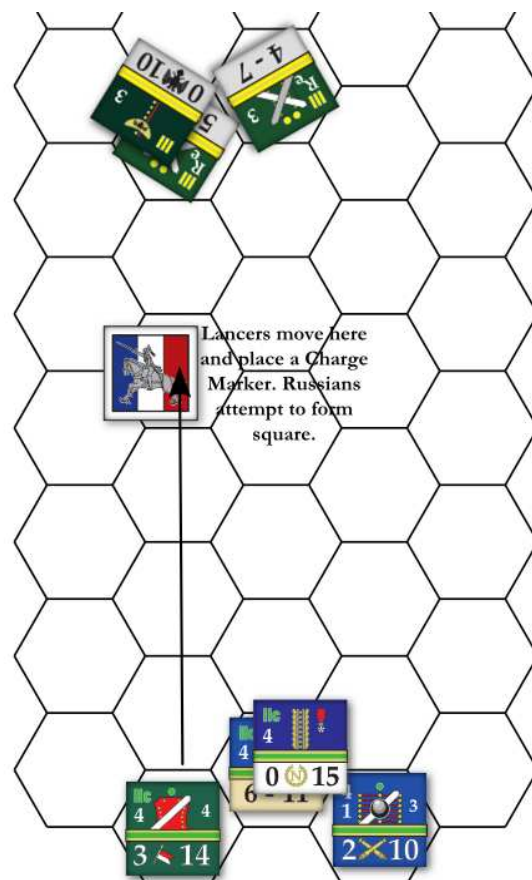
If the chosen target had formed square, the lancers would *have* to attack (charge marker placed) unless able to Recall. In *Moscow* that would require a roll of 1-4. In this case of course the 4th Lancers charge the disordered 3rd Battalion. A sensible French player would never have later sent his 1st Cuirassier against the already formed square of the 1st Battalion, but we will assume that idiocy prevailed to show what could happen.

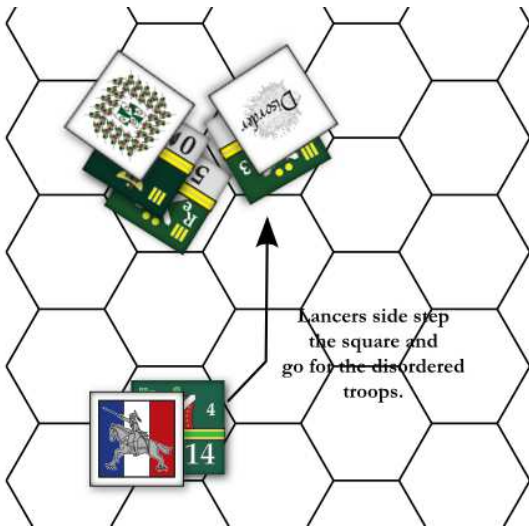
Movement not the Assault Segment, so that the divisional horse artillery battery will move and decide whether or not to unlimber after the mêlée is over. Also had it wished the Russian unit could have Opportunity Charged the Cuirassier as it approached – but this would not help the battle.

Cavalry on cavalry mêlée is straightforward – there is no Roll Close or Stand and no possible defensive shift. The French mêlée value is 27, the Russian 33 giving 1:1.5 odds. The sole modifier is the +3 to the die-roll of Defiance. The roll is 46, modified to 53 giving absolutely nothing. However, while infantry would remain glaring at each other, cavalry must simultaneously recoil on a nothing result – known as a Bounce. Both retreat one-third of their movement, become disordered, lose one increment (for leaving a Zone in the process) and then take a morale check. Both pass – if they had failed they would have Routed – and both are now Exhausted. As the Cuirassiers bounce past the Melnikov Cossacks they may not attempt an Opportunity Charge, because Bounce movement is considered Involuntary Movement.

This is the chance the Lancers have been waiting for. The way is now clear to charge the battered Polish Uhlands. The Russian mêlée value has dropped precipitously – the base of 33 is now, halved for disorder and then halved again for having exhausted mounts. They charge (note that the Russians are doubly prohibited from making an Opportunity Charge as being both disordered and exhausted). The French have a mêlée value of 9 adding two for the lance bonus against the 8.25 of the Russians. This time the odds are 1:1 and an unmodified roll of 54 generates a DD1. Normally the Russians would recoil one hex, taking one loss for leaving the French zone during mêlée. But since they were already Disordered they now PGD and perform Rout Movement to the rear. The French *must* enter the now vacant hex and *may* Regroup – a process by which they could move up to five hexes away (there is no Pursuit when the target is cavalry). In this case they do regroup so as to allow the horse-artillery a later clear line of sight and are then marked as Exhausted – note that this cannot be removed at the end of the current turn as the Charge marker is still on them. Instead the Charge marker is removed during the Reorganization segment, allowing this Exhausted marker to be removed at the end of the *next* turn.

Turns pass and once again the gallant 4th Division and its three units is picked. This time the





First Mêlée: Lanciers versus disordered 3rd Battalion: First the infantry Roll to Stand (again note that charging cavalry, being more familiar with using l'arme blanche do not need to Roll to Close). The die-modifications to the roll are a -6 for lancer and another -3 for disorder against a base morale of 16, passes with a roll of 45, but fails to get a defensive column shift. Being disordered the fire value is that of a column, doubled for Standing but then halved for disordered, the base fire value of 6 ending up as a 1:1 against the defence of six, so a 42 rolled giving no effect. Now the mêlée roll: The lancers are still 9 plus lance bonus of two totalling 11, the infantry has a mêlée value of 11 also, but halved for disorder – exactly 2:1. Result an unmodified 44 or DD1: The already disordered 3rd Battalion routs, loses one increment for leaving the lancer zone, and retreats ten hexes (route move of one half more). The lancers advance into the vacated target hex and then pursue. Since, the target routed away the lancers can pursue up to three hexes – (note that if the result was not Rout, but just a DD1 there would be no pursuit as the cavalry would already be adjacent after their advance after charge). This inflicts 3 more losses on the infantry and since the lancers are also light cavalry they inflict one more loss for a total of 4 losses from pursuit. The pursuit loss is in addition to the loss for retreating from an enemy zone. But, since the 3rd Battalion has only 4 increments it is eliminated. The exhausted lancers smugly regroup back to the cover of the soon arriving horse artillery.

Second Mêlée: Cuirassier versus 1st Battalion in square: Roll to Stand modifications are -12 for armoured cavalry (note that *Moscowa* unlike previous games shows this with a cuirass on the back of the counter) and +4 for the divisional leader. The roll is 25, reduced to less than the morale of 16. Normally this would mean disorder – but, when charged, units in square (and general order) do *not* disorder when failing. On the other hand, fire is not doubled and there is no defensive mêlée shift. Now fire: Up to nine increments can fire from a square, but there are only five present which with the Russian musketeer square multiplier of three equals 15. As usual all fire from square is divided by three – producing five generating a 1:1.5 against the defence of six. Roll 41 = miss. In the next step the cuirassier mêlée at 27 which is halved against a square to 13.5 against a Russian 14 for a mêlée of 1:1.5, the net modifier of +1 (Defrance with a +3 against Konovnitsyn with a -2) then producing a total of 26. The result is AD1 – the 1st Cuirassier disorders, loses one point and is not allowed to regroup due to the adverse result, proving that attacking squares with good morale ratings is risky.

To see just how dangerous a square can be, add the divisional light battery to the 1st Battalion stack and assume that they do not disorder (the battery happens to have the same excellent morale of 16 as does the battalion). This time the musketeer fire value is 15, plus the close-range value of 12 for the 6th Light Battery (*only* because it is the top unit), the net total then doubled to 42 (passed the roll to stand) then divided by three to a final 14. This is 2:1 but then shifted twice for canister fire (adjacent hex artillery fire) giving 3:1. A roll of 25, modified to 26 by the leader artillery bonus gives one casualty. Now the mêlée and this time the cuirassier only has 22.5 mêlée value (loss of one-sixth) halved as usual for fighting the square, which itself is now worth 18 (adding the four mêlée value of the gunners) and therefore now being an attack on the 1:2 column. The same modified result of 26 now produces an AD3. The cuirassier has now lost two points (and could easily have lost another with a better Russian fire result).

